UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.6/1995/2
27 February 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
Thirty-ninth session
New York, 15 March-4 April 1995
Item 3 (e) of the provisional agenda*

PREPARATIONS FOR THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN: ACTION FOR EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE: DRAFT PLATFORM FOR ACTION

Draft Platform for Action

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 38/10, 1/ the Commission on the Status of Women requested the Secretary-General to develop further the draft of the Platform for Action for consideration by the Commission at its thirty-ninth session, based on the texts contained in the annex to the resolution and taking into account the relevant results of the regional preparatory meetings. The Commission also requested the Secretary-General to include in the draft of the Platform for Action proposals to strengthen technical and financial cooperation to benefit women.

2. In the same resolution, the Commission invited the Secretary-General to convene, in consultation with the Bureau, informal open-ended consultations to exchange views on the draft of the Platform for Action prior to the thirty-ninth session. Informal consultations took place on 18 July and from 7 to 9 December 1994.

3. The draft Platform for Action is contained in the annex below.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1994, Supplement No. 7 (E/1994/27), chap. I, sect. C.

---

* E/CN.6/1995/1.

95-01390 (E) 090395 130395

/...

Annex

DRAFT PLATFORM FOR ACTION

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	MISSION STATEMENT	1 - 3	4
II.	GLOBAL FRAMEWORK	4 - 33	4
III.	CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN	34 - 37	9
IV.	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS	38 - 182	10
	A. The persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women	39 - 55	10
	B. Unequal access to and inadequate educational opportunities	56 - 70	15
	C. Inequalities in health status and unequal access to and inadequate health care services	71 - 87	19
	D. Violence against women	88 - 99	26
	E. Effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women	100 - 109	30
	F. Inequality in women's access to and participation in the definition of economic structures and policies and the productive process itself	110 - 127	35
	G. Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels	128 - 139	41
	H. Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women	140 - 148	44
	I. Lack of awareness of and commitment to internationally and nationally recognized women's human rights	149 - 160	47
	J. Insufficient mobilization of the mass media to promote women's positive contributions to society	161 - 170	51
	K. Lack of adequate recognition and support for women's contribution to managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment	171 - 182	53

CONTENTS (continued)

		Paragraphs	Page
V.	INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS	183 - 231	57
	A. National level	192 - 197	59
	B. Regional level	198 - 201	60
	C. International level	202 - 231	60
VI.	FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS	232 - 246	66
	A. National level	236 - 240	66
	B. Regional level	241	67
	C. International level	242 - 246	67

I. MISSION STATEMENT

1. The Platform for Action aims to accelerate the removal of obstacles to women's full and equal participation in all spheres of public and private life, including economic and political decision-making. It is an agenda for equality that seeks to safeguard women's human rights throughout the life cycle. It stresses the principle of shared responsibility and partnership between men and women as the basis for achieving equality, development and peace.

2. The Platform for Action requires immediate action to create a peaceful, developed and just world, based on the principle of equality for all peoples of all ages and from all walks of life, built on the strength of women's knowledge, energy, creativity and skills in partnership with men.

3. The success of the Platform for Action requires strong institutions and adequate resources for the implementation of the agreements made; a commitment to the equal participation of women and men in all international, regional and national bodies and policy-making processes; and mechanisms for accountability to the world's women, in whose name these promises are made.

II. GLOBAL FRAMEWORK

4. The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace is taking place as the world stands poised on the threshold of a new millennium.

5. Since the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, held at Nairobi in 1985, and the adoption of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, 1/ the world has experienced profound political, economic, social and cultural changes.

6. The end of the cold war resulted in international changes and the demise of competition between super-Powers. While the threat of global conflict has been reduced, a resurgence of nationalism and ethnic conflict has threatened peace in many regions. The decade also saw the rise in power of transnational corporations, which, by their very nature and wealth, remain beyond accountability to Governments and peoples. Global information networks emerged, facilitated by new technology; they transcended national borders and reduced distances between peoples of different cultures.

7. A world-wide move towards democratization opened up the political process in many nations. South Africa's policy of institutionalized racism - apartheid - was dismantled and a peaceful and democratic transfer of power occurred. Similarly, in Eastern Europe the transition to parliamentary democracy was rapid and relatively peaceful.

8. Development goals suffered a set-back due to the prolonged global economic recession, which had repercussions on many national economies. This led to increased unemployment in industrialized nations and the relocation of manufacturing to developing countries. Regional trading blocs were created or

strengthened and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade reconfirmed the interdependence of national economies. The period was also characterized by heavy military spending and a decline in international development assistance.

9. Evidence of the increasing fragility of peace, the environment and the institutions that govern society has prompted the international community to search for alternative paths to development and security. The participation and leadership of the half of humanity that is female is essential to the success of that search. Therefore, nothing short of a radical transformation of the relationships between men and women will enable the world to meet the challenges of the new millennium.

10. At its founding 50 years ago, the United Nations held the promise of securing justice, human rights, social progress and maintaining international peace and security. Today's reality testifies to the difficulty of attaining the goals of the United Nations for the majority of humankind. The position of women in society and the conditions in which they live demonstrate that the past can be no model for the future.

11. New policy frameworks have been proposed. The Agenda for Peace defines strategies for peace-keeping, preventive diplomacy and peacemaking. The Agenda for Development sets out specific approaches to foster development cooperation and strengthen the United Nations role to that end. While strategies outlined in the Platform for Action should contribute to development and peace, they also aim at promoting an agenda for equality.

12. Women have established themselves as central actors in the movement of humanity for peace. However, continuing nationalistic and ethnic conflicts have left them predominant among the refugees. Their equal participation in decision-making, multilateral interventions, preventive diplomacy and all peace initiatives is essential to the realization of the Agenda for Peace. Their perspective and specific needs must be fully reflected in all initiatives.

13. The Fourth World Conference on Women is the continuation of a global process formally begun in 1975 - proclaimed International Women's Year by the United Nations General Assembly. The Year was a turning-point for women. Gender-disaggregated statistics did not exist in many areas two decades ago. Little was known of the status of women in various societies and the diversity of their needs, skills and contributions.

14. The United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985) was a world-wide effort to examine the status and rights of women and to bring women into decision-making at all levels. Some Governments created special structures to address women's issues. International agencies focused greater attention on women's status and roles, as well as on their special skills and needs. In 1979, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 2/ to eradicate discrimination and inequality between men and women. In 1985, the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace adopted the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, to be implemented by the year 2000. Governments were urged to reformulate legal, political, economic and social structures to ensure equality,

development and peace. Ten years later that promise of equality and partnership has fallen far short of expectations.

15. On average, women represent a mere 10 per cent of all elected legislators world wide. The Nordic countries stand out as an exception, an example of how a well-educated female constituency has demanded and successfully achieved parity in political decision-making. Sweden is the first country to achieve parity between women and men at the Cabinet level.

16. The staffing of most government structures, however, remains dominated by men in every country. The United Nations is no exception. Fifty years after its creation, the United Nations continues to deny itself the benefits of women's leadership by their underrepresentation at decision-making levels within the Secretariat and the specialized agencies. In the private sector, women have not fared much better. Business and corporate hierarchies remain predominantly the domain of male power.

17. Largely because of the leadership of the United Nations system, the international community has attempted to respond to the challenges of the past decade. A series of conferences and conventions have explored and defined the rights and responsibilities of individuals and States on a range of global issues. Non-governmental organizations, particularly women's organizations, have played an increasingly influential role in focusing debates and in recommending actions on women's potential contribution to solving problems.

18. The World Summit for Children, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the World Conference on Human Rights, the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the International Conference on Population and Development and the World Summit for Social Development have all addressed the various facets of development and human rights and, within their specific perspectives, paid significant attention to the gender dimension. Similarly, the International Year of the World's Indigenous People and the International Year of the Family have emphasized the message of empowerment and equality. Women have played an important role in shaping the outcome of these initiatives.

19. These international events and processes are evidence that significant, global challenges threaten the very survival of humankind. Recognition of the role of women in meeting these challenges is a clear mandate for equality and for shared responsibility of men and women within family and society. International consensus on the pivotal role of women in development exists. Thus, the Fourth World Conference on Women is a conference of commitment and action.

20. Recent international developments have had a disproportionate impact on women. For those States that carried a large burden of foreign debt, structural adjustment programmes forced cuts in basic services and in investments in human development, shifting the responsibilities of basic social services from Governments to women without compensation. In some developing nations, especially in Africa, the situation was further aggravated by a decline in commodity prices.

21. Macrolevel economic policies have had an adverse impact on women and families, especially those in poverty. Inequities in quality of life, nutrition, health, education and opportunities for a full and productive life have increased from region to region and within nations. Poverty has increased in both absolute and relative terms, and the number of women living in poverty has increased in all regions.

22. One fourth of all households worldwide are headed by women, and households dependent on female income even where men are present, are among the poorest. Family disintegration, urban migration, war and internal displacements are factors contributing to the rise of female-headed households.

23. The growth of the world population is at an all-time high in absolute numbers, with current increments approaching 90 million persons annually. Two other major demographic trends had profound repercussions on the dependency ratio within families. In many developing countries, 45-50 per cent of the population is less than 25 years old, while in industrialized nations, both the number and proportion of elderly people are increasing. Women, who are the principal care-givers to children, the sick and the elderly, carry these additional responsibilities. A reformulation of long-term social policies and investments is required for a more equitable sharing of family responsibilities between men and women. Women have different needs at various stages of the life cycle, which need to be addressed in policy planning and programme and project implementation.

24. In the past 20 years, the world has seen an explosion in the field of communications. With advances in computer technology and satellite and cable television, global access to information continues to increase and expand, creating new opportunities for the participation of women in communications and the mass media and for dissemination of information about women. Greater involvement of women in both the technical and decision-making areas of communication and the media would increase awareness of women's lives from their own perspective.

25. Continuing environmental degradation has a direct impact on women's lives. Women's health and their sustainable livelihood are threatened by pollution and toxic wastes, and by large-scale deforestation, desertification and soil depletion. Those most affected are rural women, whose livelihood and daily subsistence depends directly on sustainable ecosystems.

26. These global trends and the conflicts arising from them have brought profound changes in family survival strategies and structures. Rural to urban migration has increased substantially in all regions. The urban population is projected to reach 57 per cent by the year 2000. An estimated 125 million people are migrants, displaced or refugees from conflict or environmental stress; half of them are in developing countries. These massive movements of people have profound consequences for family structure and have unequal consequences for women and men.

27. Added to the political, economic and ecological turmoil of the decade was the spectre of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) pandemic. According to estimates of the World Health Organization (WHO), the number of acquired

immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) cases had risen to 2.5 million by mid-1993. An estimated 14 million people are now infected with HIV, and it is projected that another 20 or 30 million will be infected by the end of the decade if effective prevention strategies are not pursued. Transmission of the virus is increasing at an alarming rate among women and girls.

28. Since 1975, significant knowledge and information has been generated about the status of women and the conditions under which they live. From infancy, throughout the entire life cycle, women's daily existence and long-term aspirations are restricted by attitudes, structures and a lack of resources, which prevent their full and equal participation. Discrimination against women begins at birth and must therefore be addressed from birth onward.

29. The past decade demonstrated that by expanding opportunities for women, especially in ways that enhance their productivity and income-earning potential, women will be able to raise their standard of living, thereby contributing to improved family well-being and the reduction and eradication of poverty, as well as to better national economic performance.

30. During the decade, the growing strength of the non-governmental sector, particularly women's organizations, became the driving force for change. Despite their diversity, women expressed solidarity. They organized, networked and advocated. Women's organizations became catalysts for new approaches to development. Women, particularly through non-governmental organizations, participated in global, regional, national and community forums and strongly influenced the international debates on environmental management and conservation, human rights, violence against women, population and sustainable development, economic expansion and science and technology.

31. This period also recognized the variety of women's skills in all spheres of life. Women's traditional and indigenous knowledge of science and technology became known as a source of innovative and inexpensive solutions. Yet in the absence of women from decision-making, their perspectives and priorities were not adequately considered; hence, many institutions failed to be responsive to change.

32. The Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women established a framework for achieving the goals of equality, development and peace. These goals are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. At every stage and in all aspects of life, the principle of equality of women and men must be integral to the socialization process. The home is where girls and boys first learn of their rights and their responsibilities to each other and to society. When men and women are not equal partners in private life, it is all the more difficult to effect change in public life.

33. International solidarity demonstrated that it was possible to bring an end to institutionalized racism. Renewed global commitment, greater solidarity and accountability are necessary in order to achieve equality between men and women. Both the diversity and universality of women's experiences, knowledge, vision and hopes are a source of strength and the basis for implementation of the Platform for Action.

III. CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

34. The advancement of women and the achievement of equality between men and women is not simply an issue of social justice. It is the only way to build a sustainable, just and developed society. Empowerment and equality of women are prerequisites for achieving political, social, economic, cultural and environmental security among all peoples in the next century.

35. The goals set out in the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women have not been achieved. A profusion of barriers to women's empowerment remain, despite the efforts of enlightened Governments, non-governmental organizations and women and men everywhere. Vast political and economic upheavals, armed conflict and ingrained prejudicial attitudes towards women and girls are but a few of the impediments encountered since the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, in 1985.

36. A review of progress since the Nairobi Conference highlights special concerns - areas of particular urgency that stand out as priorities for action. All parties working for the advancement of women should focus action and resources on the critical areas of concern which are, necessarily, interrelated, interdependent and of equal priority.

37. The Platform for Action aims to accelerate the removal of the remaining obstacles to women's full and equal participation in all spheres of life, including economic and political decision-making; to protect women's human rights throughout the life cycle; and to integrate women's concerns into all areas of sustainable development so that women and men can work together for equality, development and peace. To this end, the international community, Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector are called upon to take strategic action in the following critical areas of concern:

- The persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women
- Unequal access to and inadequate educational opportunities
- Inequalities in health status and unequal access to and inadequate health care services
- Violence against women
- Effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women
- Inequality in women's access to and participation in the definition of economic structures and policies and the productive process itself
- Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels
- Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women

- Lack of awareness of and commitment to internationally and nationally recognized women's human rights

- Insufficient mobilization of the mass media to promote women's positive contributions to society

- Lack of adequate recognition and support for women's contribution to managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment

IV. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

38. In each area of critical concern the problem is diagnosed and strategic objectives proposed with concrete actions to be taken by various actors in order to achieve these objectives. The strategic objectives are derived from the critical areas of concern, and specific actions to be taken to achieve them cut across the boundaries of equality, development and peace - the goals of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women - and reflect their interdependence. The objectives and actions are interlinked, equal in priority and mutually reinforcing.

A. The persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women

39. Poverty is a multidimensional, complex situation that has economic, educational, social, political, cultural and technological dimensions. The prolonged global economic recession, combined with the debt crisis and structural adjustment programmes, civil strife and displacement and environmental degradation have undermined the capacity of Governments to meet the basic needs of their populations. This has resulted in a specific trend towards the impoverishment of women, the extent of which varies from region to region. Migration and changing family structures have placed additional burdens on women, especially those who provide for several dependants. Macroeconomic policies have not been readjusted to respond to these trends. Primarily concerned with the formal sector of the economy, these policies have tended to hamper the initiatives of women and failed to consider the differential impact on women and men. In order to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, women must contribute fully to the formulation of macroeconomic and social policies, as well as to anti-poverty initiatives.

40. The empowerment of women is a critical factor in the eradication of poverty. Women contribute to the economy and the reduction of poverty through both paid and unpaid work at home, in the community and in the workplace. As women constitute the majority of the world's poor, the release of their productive potential is essential to the eradication of poverty.

41. However, in the past decade the number of women living in poverty has increased disproportionately to men, particularly in countries which themselves are poor. While this trend can be attributed partially to the negative impact of structural adjustment programmes and the burden of debt-servicing, the rigidity of socially ascribed roles and women's limited access to education and productive resources are also responsible.

42. While poverty affects households as a whole, women bear a disproportionate burden, attempting to manage household consumption under conditions of increasing scarcity. Rural, displaced and refugee women are particularly burdened. With the number of female-headed households increasing worldwide, more divorced, widowed or single women are falling deeper into poverty. Especially vulnerable are older women and young girls. New patterns of poverty have also emerged.

43. Women's poverty is directly related to their lack of access to services and education, their lack of rights, and structural and attitudinal barriers to land ownership, inheritance, employment, income, credit and training. Where employment opportunities exist, women, particularly young women, are frequently relegated to the lowest wage categories, often without job security, legal protection or trade union support.

44. Investments that increase the productive capacities of women through access to credit, technical assistance and training raise incomes and improve nutrition, education and health care within the household. However, when women are not participants or decision makers in the design of macroeconomic interventions, the opportunity to enhance women's productive potential is lost.

45. Sustainable development is only possible through improving the economic and social status of women. Equal opportunities in education and employment to ensure women's autonomy and financial independence, access to health care and housing and ensuring legal and human rights for women at every stage of the life cycle, are all essential to eradicating poverty. Similar actions targeted specifically to the poorest of the poor are also needed. Women in poverty have demonstrated that they possess knowledge, capacities and management skills. Only when women are enabled to participate fully will they and their families be able to overcome poverty.

Strategic objective A.1. Adopt and maintain macroeconomic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women to overcome poverty

Actions to be taken

46. By Governments:

(a) Pursue sound macroeconomic policies that are gender-sensitive, designed with the full participation of women and based on development strategies centred on people;

(b) Restructure and target the allocation of public expenditures to address the basic needs of women, expand social services to the poor, especially in education and primary health care, including family planning, and ensure access to a clean and available water supply;

(c) Allocate the necessary financial, technical and human resources to ensure food security and food self-sufficiency;

(d) Provide adequate safety nets and strengthen state- and community-based support systems, as an integral part of social policy, to enable the poor to withstand adverse economic environments and preserve their livelihood and assets in times of crisis;

(e) Generate economic policies that have a positive impact on the employment and income of women workers;

(f) Formulate and implement specific economic, agricultural and related policies in support of female-headed households;

(g) Develop agricultural policies and programmes that protect and encourage women food producers, particularly through the provision of appropriate infrastructure (markets, access roads, transportation and so forth) and technology, especially in rural areas;

(h) Develop and implement equitable food-pricing policies and develop anti-poverty and employment programmes that improve the access of food purchasers;

(i) Introduce measures to make displaced women productive, including the recognition of the qualifications and skills of immigrant and refugee women, to enable their full integration into the labour force;

(j) Develop innovative programmes to provide affordable housing and access to land, with special emphasis on meeting the needs of female heads of households and disabled, destitute, displaced and elderly women, living in extreme poverty;

(k) Develop special programmes that reflect the specific needs of children, particularly girls, young women and the elderly, who are least able to gain access to resources;

(l) Establish mechanisms to ensure that resource allocation at the macro, sectoral and project levels reflects the social costs and benefits of women's work;

(m) Allocate adequate resources to subsistence farmers, the majority of whom are women, in the areas of finance, services and inputs in order to increase production.

47. By international financial and development institutions, international and bilateral donors, especially the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and regional development banks:

(a) Increase resources allocated to the elimination of poverty, and target women in poverty;

(b) Continue to integrate gender issues into the design and implementation of lending programmes, including structural adjustment programmes;

(c) Substantially reduce or cancel external debt to increase the capacities of poor nations to finance programmes and projects targeted at disadvantaged women;

(d) Ensure that structural adjustment programmes do not shift the responsibility of basic social services from Governments to women without compensation;

(e) Create an enabling environment that allows women to build and maintain sustainable livelihoods.

Strategic objective A.2. Revise laws and administrative practices that limit disadvantaged women's access to economic resources

Actions to be taken

48. By Governments:

(a) Provide low-cost legal services, including legal literacy, especially designed to reach women living in poverty;

(b) Repeal laws that exacerbate poverty among disadvantaged women, especially laws dealing with inheritance and land rights, and all forms of land-use and ownership.

Strategic objective A.3. Provide women with access to credit and savings

Actions to be taken

49. By Governments:

(a) Provide capital, finance and legislative support to banks and financial institutions that provide services to disadvantaged women in rural and urban areas;

(b) Encourage link between financial institutions and non-governmental organizations and support innovative lending practices such as those of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh.

50. By commercial banks, specialized financial institutions and the private sector:

(a) Use a credit and savings methodology that is effective in reaching women in poverty and innovative in reducing transaction costs and redefining risk;

(b) Open special windows for lending to women, including young women, who lack access to traditional sources of collateral;

(c) Reduce the minimum deposit and other requirements for opening bank accounts;

(d) Ensure the participation and joint ownership, where possible, of women borrowers in the decision-making of institutions providing credit and financial services.

51. By international multilateral and bilateral development cooperation organizations:

Support, through the provision of capital and resources, financial institutions that serve low-income women entrepreneurs and producers, in both the formal and informal sectors.

52. By Governments and multilateral financial institutions:

(a) Review rules and procedures of formal national and international financial institutions that obstruct replications of the Grameen Bank prototype;

(b) Ensure parity in the flow and use of financial resources to low-income households, women entrepreneurs and producers by the year 2005;

(c) Provide financial, technical and institutional support to 1,000 participatory financial institutions and non-governmental organizations by the year 2005.

53. By international organizations:

Increase funding for programmes and projects designed to promote sustainable and productive entrepreneurial activities among disadvantaged women.

Strategic objective A.4. Conduct research that enables women to overcome poverty

Actions to be taken

54. By Governments, intergovernmental organizations, academic and research institutions and the private sector:

(a) Develop theoretical and practical means for incorporating gender perspectives into all aspects of economic policy-making, including structural adjustment programmes;

(b) Conduct gender-impact studies of structural adjustment programmes and disseminate research findings.

55. By national and international statistical organizations:

(a) Collect gender and age-disaggregated data on poverty and all aspects of economic activity, and develop statistical indicators to facilitate the assessment of economic performance from a gender perspective;

(b) Collect and analyse statistical data on the contribution of women's unpaid work to the national economy.

B. Unequal access to and inadequate educational opportunities

56. Education is a basic human right and an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality, development and peace. Non-discriminatory education benefits both girls and boys, and thus ultimately leads to more equal and democratic relationships between women and men. Equality of access is necessary if more women are to become agents of change. Investing in education and training for girls and women, with its exceptionally high social and economic return, has proved to be one of the best means of achieving sustainable development.

57. On a regional level, girls and boys have achieved equal access to primary education, except in Africa, in particular sub-Saharan Africa, and Central and Southern Asia. Progress has been made in secondary education, where parity has been achieved in the developed countries and in Eastern Europe. Enrolment of girls in tertiary education has increased considerably. Yet more than five years after the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, 1990) adopted the World Declaration on Education for All and the Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs, approximately 100 million children, including at least 60 million girls, are without access to primary schooling, and more than two thirds of the world's 960 million illiterate adults are women. The high number of illiterate females which is increasing in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab States, remains a severe impediment to both personal and national development.

58. Discrimination in girls' access to education persists in many areas, owing to customary attitudes, early marriages and pregnancies, inadequate teaching and educational materials, and lack of adequate schooling facilities. In many cases, girls start to undertake heavy domestic chores at a very early age. Girls and young women are expected to manage both educational and domestic responsibilities, often resulting in poor scholastic performance and early drop-out from the educational system. This has long-lasting consequences for women in both their productive and reproductive roles, as well as for their participation in policy formulation and decision-making.

59. Curricula and teaching materials remain gender-biased to a large degree, fail to meet the maturational differences of both sexes and are rarely sensitive to the specific needs of girls and women. This reinforces traditional female roles which deny women opportunities for full and equal partnership in society. Lack of gender awareness by educators at all levels, including school counsellors, strengthens existing inequities between males and females by reinforcing discriminatory tendencies and undermines girls' self-esteem.

60. Education, which equips girls and women to enter any field, exposing them to science, technology and modern communications, stimulates their creativity and self-esteem and is structured to keep them from dropping out prematurely, is a necessary human development initiative. Advanced study in science and technology prepares women to take an active role in the technological development of their countries, thus necessitating a diverse approach to vocational and technical training. Technology is gradually changing many developing countries, and it is essential that women not only benefit from it, but also participate in the process from the design to the application stage. In some cases, education of girls frequently does not prepare them for employment because education and training policies have not been sufficiently adapted to meet the changing needs of the labour market.

61. The mass media are one of the most powerful means of education. As an educational tool and means of shaping values, the mass media can be utilized by educators and governmental and non-governmental institutions for the development and advancement of women. Television especially has the greatest impact on young people, thereby making it essential that educators teach critical judgement and analytical skills.

62. Resources allocated to education worldwide are insufficient and in cases of structural adjustment programmes are further diminished. This has a long-term adverse effect on human development, particularly on that of women.

Strategic objective B.1. Ensure equal access to education

Actions to be taken

63. By Governments:

(a) Ensure universal access to primary education and the completion of primary education by at least 80 per cent of children, with special emphasis on girls. Similarly, ensure equal access to secondary education by the year 2005 and equal access to higher education for girls and boys, including the disadvantaged and gifted. These efforts will help achieve the targets set in the Convention on the Rights of the Child 3/ and the World Declaration on Education for All; 4/

(b) Reduce disparities in access to third-level education, and ensure women's equal access to career development, training, scholarships and fellowships;

(c) Create a gender-sensitive educational system in order to ensure equal educational and training opportunities and equal participation of women in educational administration and policy-making;

(d) Increase enrolment and retention rates of girls by enlisting the support of the community and parents through campaigns, flexible school schedules, incentives, scholarships and other means to minimize the costs of girls' education to their families;

(e) Make available non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive professional school counselling and career education programmes to encourage girls to pursue academic and technical curricula in order to widen their future career opportunities.

Strategic objective B.2. Eradicate illiteracy among women world wide by the year 2000

Actions to be taken

64. By Governments, international, regional and national bodies, bilateral and multilateral donors and non-governmental organizations:

(a) Reduce the adult illiteracy rate to at least half its 1990 level, with emphasis on female literacy;

(b) Eliminate the gender gap in basic and functional literacy by the year 2000, as recommended in the World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien), and narrow the disparities between developed and developing countries.

Strategic objective B.3. Improve access to vocational training, science and technology and continuing education

Actions to be taken

65. By Governments, in cooperation with employers and community, women's and youth organizations:

(a) Develop education, training and retraining policies that focus on women, especially young women, to provide skills to meet the demands of a changing economy;

(b) Diversify vocational and technical training and increase access to education in science, mathematics, engineering, environmental sciences and technology, information technology and high technology, as well as management training;

(c) Adapt curricula and teaching materials to promote non-traditional careers for women;

(d) Increase technical, managerial and marketing training opportunities for women in agriculture, industry and business to increase income-generating opportunities, women's participation in economic decision-making and their contribution to production and marketing.

Strategic objective B.4. Develop non-discriminatory education and training

Actions to be taken

66. By Governments, educational authorities and other educational and academic institutions:

(a) Develop curricula, textbooks and teaching aids free of sex-stereotypes for all levels of education, including teacher training;

(b) Develop training programmes and materials for teachers and educators that raise awareness about the status and role of women in the family and society and promote equality, cooperation, mutual respect and shared responsibilities between girls and boys from pre-school level onward;

(c) Take positive measures to increase the proportion of women in educational policy- and decision-making, in higher levels of education and in academic disciplines that are traditionally male;

(d) Support and develop gender studies and research and apply them in the development of curricula, textbooks and teaching aids and in teacher training;

(e) Develop education and information programmes, particularly in conjunction with the mass media, that make the public, particularly parents, aware of the importance of non-discriminatory education for children, especially daughters, and the equal sharing of domestic responsibilities between girls and boys.

Strategic objective B.5. Allocate sufficient resources for educational reforms and monitor implementation

Actions to be taken

67. By Governments:

(a) Provide the required budgetary resources by reallocating funds from other sectors, such as the military, to the educational sector, with reallocation within the educational sector to ensure at least 50 per cent of funds for basic education;

(b) Establish a mechanism to monitor the implementation of educational reforms and measures in relevant ministries.

68. By Governments, private and public institutions, foundations, research institutes and non-governmental organizations:

Mobilize additional funds from organizations in the private sector to meet the costs of education.

69. By multilateral development institutions, including the World Bank, regional development banks, bilateral donors and foundations:

(a) Increase funding for the education and training needs of girls and women as a priority in development programmes;

(b) Maintain or increase funding levels for education in structural adjustment programmes, including lending and stabilization programmes.

70. By international and intergovernmental organizations, especially the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), at the global level:

Monitor progress using educational indicators generated by national, regional and international bodies and make Governments accountable for implementing measures to close the gap between women and men in education and training opportunities, and in the levels of achievement in all fields, particularly primary and literacy programmes.

C. Inequalities in health status and unequal access to and inadequate health care services

71. The right to health is a fundamental human right vital to women's ability to participate in all areas of public and private life. Health and well-being elude millions of women. Throughout their lives, women's health is affected by multiple factors, including biological differences and social conditions, discrimination and lack of access to and inadequate health care and other services. Lack of food and inadequate access to safe water and sanitation facilities, particularly in rural and poor urban areas, and deficient housing conditions overburden women and their families and pose a threat to their health. While many countries have made significant advances in primary health care, the high morbidity and mortality rates of women due to inadequate attention to reproductive health persist.

72. Through their organizations, women have raised concerns about their own health. In their efforts to control the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, women, who represent half of all adults newly infected with HIV/AIDS, have emphasized their social vulnerability. In national and international forums, women have articulated that to attain optimal health throughout the life cycle, equality, including the sharing of family responsibilities, development and peace are necessary conditions.

73. Women's mental and physical health are jeopardized by social and behavioural factors that also restrict their access to quality health care, information and services. A continuing deterioration of public health systems,

a decrease in public health spending and increasing privatization of health care systems compound the problem. This situation not only directly affects the health of girls and women, but also places extra responsibilities on women, who act as primary health care providers within the family and community. Women's roles are often not acknowledged and women lack the necessary social and economic support.

74. Inadequate access to safe and effective contraceptive methods and high quality maternal care, and unsafe abortions, result in 500,000 maternal deaths a year, as well as in acute and chronic complications affecting approximately 20 million women. Most of these deaths, ill health and injuries are preventable through improved access to adequate health care services, including a wide range of safe and effective contraceptive methods. Shared responsibility between women and men in matters related to sexual and reproductive behaviour is also essential to improving women's health.

75. Discrimination against girls in access to nutrition and health care services endangers their current and future health. Conditions that force girls into early marriage, pregnancy and childbearing, along with such harmful practices as son preference and female genital mutilation, pose unnecessary health risks.

76. Sexual violence and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, are having a devastating effect on women's health, particularly the health of adolescent girls and young women. Women are often not able to insist on safe sex practices and have little access to information on prevention. The consequences of HIV/AIDS reach beyond women's health to their role as caregivers to the sick and destitute. The social, developmental and health consequences of AIDS need to be seen through a gender perspective, but this is not always recognized. Cancers of the reproductive system and infertility also affect growing numbers of women and are often preventable.

77. Adolescent girls are both biologically and psychosocially more vulnerable than boys to the consequences of unprotected sexual relations. The trend to early sexual experience increases the risk of unwanted and too early pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection, and unsafe abortions. Teenage pregnancy often marks the end of a young woman's access to education.

78. There is growing evidence that links mental disorders with alienation, powerlessness and poverty, conditions most frequently experienced by women, along with overwork and stress. Drug abuse and domestic violence are among other health issues of growing concern to women. Occupational health issues are also growing in importance, as women now constitute over one third of the formal labour market, and this figure is rising. With the increase in life expectancy, chronic non-communicable diseases and other health concerns of elderly women urgently require more attention.

79. Statistical data on health are not systematically collected, gender disaggregated or analysed by age and sex. Recent and reliable data on maternal mortality and related indicators are not available in some countries. Research in areas important to women's health often lack funding. Drug testing on female

subjects to establish basic information about dosage, side-effects and drug effectiveness are noticeably absent.

Strategic objective C.1. Achieve universal access to appropriate, affordable and quality health care and related services

Actions to be taken

80. By Governments:

(a) Implement the commitments made at the International Conference on Population and Development and the World Summit for Social Development to meet the health care needs of women;

(b) Design health interventions and services to take into account women's multiple roles and responsibilities, the demands on their time, the special needs of women with disabilities, and the diversity of women's needs across age, socio-economic and cultural differences;

(c) Make more accessible, available and affordable primary health care services and facilities, including reproductive health care and family planning information and services, as specified in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development; 5/

(d) Redesign health information, services and training for health workers so that they take into account women's specific physical and mental health needs at all ages through a holistic approach that includes nutritional, occupational, environmental, sexual and reproductive health interventions;

(e) Strengthen and reorient health services, particularly primary health care, attain full coverage of the population and ensure universal access to quality health services for girls and women, including information and services related to reproductive health, in order to reduce maternal morbidity and achieve the agreed-upon goal of reducing maternal mortality by 50 percent of the 1990 levels by the year 2000 and a further one half by the year 2015, and provide quality services at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels;

(f) Design health interventions to address the needs of women throughout their life cycle. In this context, particular attention should be given to the needs of girls. Special attention should be given to the achievement of internationally approved goals for the reduction of infant and child mortality - specifically, by the year 2000, the reduction of mortality rates of infants and children under five years of age by one third of the 1990 level, or 50 to 70 per 1,000 live births, whichever is less; by the year 2015 an infant mortality rate

below 35 per 1,000 live births and an under-five mortality rate below 45 per 1,000;

(g) Create special policies, programmes and legislation necessary to alleviate and eliminate occupational health hazards associated with women's work in the home and in the workplace;

(h) Integrate mental health services into primary health care systems, developing other supportive programmes and training primary health workers to recognize and treat girls and women who are under stress, who have emotional problems or who have been subjected to violence or other abuse, including armed and non-armed conflict;

(i) Review existing mental health legislation, facilities and support services to ensure that they meet the changing roles and responsibilities of women wherever they reside;

(j) Establish mechanisms to involve non-governmental organizations, science and technology groups, health care professionals and other bodies working to improve the health of girls, youth and women in government policy-making, programme design and implementation within the health sector and related sectors at all levels;

(k) Provide financial support and information to strengthen non-governmental organizations working on women's health, and help develop networks aimed at improving coordination and collaboration between all sectors that affect health;

(l) Rationalize drug procurement and adopt policies using the WHO Model List of essential drugs as a guideline;

(m) Provide improved access and appropriateness of treatment services for women drug abusers and their families;

(n) Ensure food security and universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation by the year 2000.

Strategic objective C.2. Strengthen preventive programmes that address main threats to women's health

Actions to be taken

81. By Governments, non-governmental organizations, the mass media and other organizations:

(a) Conduct both formal and informal educational programmes on public health that encourage and enable women to make decisions on and take responsibility for their own health. Special focus should be placed on programmes that discourage harmful attitudes and practices, including son preference, female genital mutilation, female foeticide and infanticide, violence, discrimination against girls and women in

food allocation, and others related to the health and wellness of women;

(b) Reinforce laws, institutions and cultural norms and practices that reduce discrimination against women and compel men and boys to take responsibility for their sexual and reproductive behaviour and to share equally in child care and household maintenance;

(c) Prepare and disseminate information, through campaigns and the education system, designed to ensure that women and men, particularly young people, can acquire knowledge about their health, especially information on sexuality and reproduction, including such issues as menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, drug and alcohol abuse and prevention of violence;

(d) Create and support programmes in the educational system, in the workplace and in the community to make sport and recreation available to girls and women on the same basis as they are to men;

(e) Develop policies that recognize the disproportionate and increasing burden on women as health and care providers in the family and community by providing women with adequate support from health and social services and adopting regulations to ensure that the working conditions of women at all levels of the health system are non-discriminatory and enable them to work effectively;

(f) Ensure that health and nutritional training form an integral part of all adult literacy programmes and school curricula from the primary level;

(g) Provide updated training, information and services to health care providers to empower them to give compassionate, appropriate and timely health services to women at all stages of their life cycle, taking into account women's physical and mental health needs, through a holistic approach that includes nutritional, occupational, environmental, sexual and reproductive health interventions;

(h) Reduce severe and moderate malnutrition among children under the age of five by one half of 1990 levels.

Strategic objective C.3. Undertake multisectoral initiatives, sensitive to women's life situations, that address the HIV pandemic

Actions to be taken

82. By Governments, international bodies, bilateral and multilateral donors and non-governmental organizations:

(a) Ensure the involvement of women, especially those affected by the epidemic, in all decision-making relating to the epidemic, including HIV policy and programme development;

(b) Ensure equity for women with respect to the law, based on established principles of human rights and access to legal protection and redress;

(c) Review and amend laws and practices that may contribute to women's susceptibility to HIV infection;

(d) Develop multisectoral programmes and strategies to end the social subordination of women and girls and to ensure their economic empowerment;

(e) Develop programmes to facilitate community discussion of strategies for protecting women and young girls from sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection, violence and unwanted pregnancies and for ensuring an equitable sharing of the burden of care created by the epidemic;

(f) Assist women and their formal and informal organizations to establish and expand effective peer education and outreach programmes;

(g) Ensure the provision of affordable prevention services, accessible to women and sensitive to their needs, and expand the provision of counselling services for women;

(h) Support action-oriented research on affordable methods, controlled by women, to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection; on strategies that women use to protect themselves; and on methods of care, support and treatment of women infected with HIV, ensuring the involvement of those women in all aspects of such research;

(i) Design programmes for pre-adolescent boys and teenagers and men of all ages, aimed at encouraging responsible sexual and reproductive behaviour, including condom use;

(j) Provide workshops and specialized training in prevention of the epidemic and its repercussions on both women and men, for decision makers and opinion leaders at all levels of the community, including religious and traditional authorities;

(k) Provide resources and facilities to women who find themselves the principal caregivers or economic support for those affected by the epidemic and the survivors, particularly children;

(l) Encourage all sectors of society, including the public sector, to develop compassionate and supportive HIV-related personnel policies and practices;

(m) Acknowledge that the higher risk of contracting HIV among females is linked to both intravenous drug use and high-risk, drug-influenced sexual behaviour, and provide appropriate preventive care and treatment.

83. By non-governmental organizations, particularly youth and women's organizations:

Facilitate the development of community strategies that will assist in protecting women from infection, mobilize all parts of the community in response and exert pressure on all responsible authorities to respond in a timely, effective, sustainable and gender-sensitive manner.

84. By Governments, non-governmental organizations, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and other bodies of the United Nations system:

(a) Develop gender-sensitive legal, ethical and human rights policies to provide guidance to the global response;

(b) Support and initiate research which addresses women's needs and situations, including research on HIV infection in women and on female-controlled methods of protection, such as non-spermicidal microbicide;

(c) Support and strengthen national capacity to create and improve HIV policies and programmes that support and protect women and are sensitive to their life circumstances.

Strategic objective C.4. Promote research and information dissemination on women's health

Actions to be taken

85. By Governments:

(a) Train personnel and introduce systems that allow for the use of data collected and analysed on the basis of sex, age and socio-economic differentials, in policy-making and planning;

(b) Increase the number of women researchers and scientists to achieve at a minimum the agreed target of 30 per cent by the year 2000, recognizing that full equality should be achieved at the earliest possible date;

(c) Increase support for biomedical, behavioural, epidemiological and health service research into diseases and conditions, such as breast cancer and infections of the reproductive tract;

(d) Provide assistance to fund research on the conditions that affect the morbidity of women in the latter years of their life cycle, especially chronic non-communicable disease;

(e) Finance social, economic, political and cultural research on how gender inequalities affect women's health (etiology, epidemiology, provision and utilization of services, eventual outcome of treatment); support research on neglected areas of women's health, such as occupational health, cardiovascular diseases, environmentally related and tropical diseases and HIV/AIDS;

(f) Provide financial and institutional support for research on safe, effective and affordable technologies for reproductive and sexual health of women and men, including safe and effective methods for the regulation of fertility, barrier methods to protect against sexually transmitted diseases/HIV, and simple and inexpensive methods of diagnosing such diseases, among others;

(g) Fund research on traditional medicine and health care, especially as practised by indigenous women, with a view to applying safe, effective and inexpensive methods in the public health system;

(h) Create programmes to disseminate available data and research findings.

Strategic objective C.5. Increase resources for women's health

Actions to be taken

86. By Governments:

(a) Increase budgetary allocations for basic health and social services, with adequate support for secondary and tertiary levels, and give special attention to the health of girls and women and to rural health programmes;

(b) Develop innovative approaches to funding health services through promoting community participation and local financing.

87. By Governments, international financial institutions and bilateral donors:

(a) Institute policies favourable to public investment in women's health and increase allocations for such investment;

(b) Monitor and evaluate progress achieved in women's health status.

D. Violence against women

88. Violence against women is a violation of basic human rights. Knowledge about its causes, incidence and measures to combat it have been developed since the Nairobi Conference. In all societies, women and girls are subjected to physical, sexual and psychological abuse which cuts across boundaries of class, ethnic group, religion, age and level of development. The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women 6/ condemns gender-based violence, defined as violence encountered by women and girls, within the family and the community.

This includes domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment and intimidation in the workplace and in educational institutions; trafficking of women and girls and forced prostitution; harmful traditional practices; and violence against women and girls condoned by the State.

89. Acts or threat of violence instil fear and insecurity in women's lives, rendering their aspirations for equality futile. Violence against women throughout the life cycle derives essentially from the lower status accorded to women in the family and in society. Physical, psychological or sexual violence, whether occurring in the home or in society, is linked to male power privilege and control. Most of the violence against women and girls occurs in the family, where violence is often tolerated and encouraged. The neglect and physical and sexual abuse of girl-children by family members and incidences of spousal abuse and rape are hidden from view and difficult to detect.

90. Violence against women and girls is abetted by their lack of legal literacy, by the lack of laws to prohibit violence, by inadequate efforts on the part of public authorities to enforce existing laws and by the absence of educational and other means to address the causes of violence. Developing a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to the challenging task of creating violence-free families is not only a necessity, but an achievable reality. The concept of equality and partnership between women and men must permeate all stages of the socialization process. Educational systems should promote self-respect, mutual respect between women and men and peaceful mechanisms of conflict resolution at all levels.

91. The absence of adequate statistics on the incidence of violence make the elaboration of programmes and monitoring of changes difficult. Inadequate documentation and research on domestic violence, sexual harassment and violence against women and girls, in private and public, including in the workplace, impede efforts to design specific intervention strategies. Experience in a number of countries shows that women and men can be mobilized to overcome violence in all its forms and that effective public measures can be taken to address both the consequences and the causes of violence. Images of violence against women including rape or sexual slavery, portrayed in the mass media may be a contributing factor to its continued prevalence, influencing young people and the community at large.

92. Refugee, displaced and migrant women and women in zones of conflict or foreign occupation are often subjected to sexual harassment and violence by persons in positions of authority.

93. The 1949 Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others 7/ has been of little consequence in eliminating trafficking in women for the sex trade. The use of women in international prostitution networks has become a significant international business, particularly with the increase of trafficking in girls and children.

Strategic objective D.1. Take integrated measures to prevent and eradicate violence against women

Actions to be taken

94. By Governments:

(a) Enact or reinforce legislation which makes all violence against women a crime, whether in the home or in society, and a violation of women's human rights, subject to legal sanctions against perpetrators;

(b) Take legal action against perpetrators of violence against women;

(c) Enact or reinforce legislation at the national level in accordance with the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, exercising due diligence and emphasizing the prevention of violence, as well as the protection of women subject to violence, prosecution of offenders and rehabilitation of victims and perpetrators;

(d) All stages of the educational system should promote the concept of equality and shared responsibility of women and men, showing the links between inequality between men and women and violence against women, affirming that violence against women is illegal and promoting non-violent attitudes and mutual respect between women and men;

(e) Create institutional mechanisms so that women can report acts of violence against them in a safe and confidential environment;

(f) Reform training of judicial, legal and police personnel sensitizing them to the nature of gender-based violence so that fair treatment of female victims of violence can be ensured; recruit more women to those professions;

(g) Sponsor programmes that increase awareness and enhance sensitivity among legal and health professionals, including counsellors, to the nature and dynamics of violence against women.

95. By Governments, including local governments, community organizations and non-governmental organizations:

(a) Provide well-funded shelters for women subjected to violence, as well as medical, psychological and employment counselling services;

(b) Organize, support and fund community-based education and training campaigns to raise awareness about violence as a violation of human rights, and mobilize communities to use traditional and innovative methods of conflict resolution;

(c) Organize educational programmes for girls, boys and women so that they can learn to protect themselves against violence;

(d) Encourage the mass media to publicize information on assistance available to women who are victims of violence.

96. By Governments, employers, trade unions, community and youth organizations and non-governmental organizations:

(a) Develop programmes and procedures to eliminate sexual harassment in all educational institutions, workplaces and elsewhere;

(b) Develop programmes and procedures to educate and raise awareness about violence as a violation of women's human rights;

(c) Develop counselling and rehabilitation programmes for adolescents in homes where abusive relationships exist.

97. By Governments, international organizations and women's non-governmental organizations:

(a) Monitor the implementation and impact of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 2/ especially as it relates to general recommendation 19, adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its eleventh session, 8/ and of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women;

(b) Strengthen the mandate and support the work of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women.

Strategic objective D.2. Study the causes of violence against women

Actions to be taken

98. By Governments, the United Nations, other international organizations, such as UNESCO and the Organization of American States, research institutions, women's and youth organizations and intergovernmental organizations:

(a) Study the causes of violence against women in their social, economic and political context;

(b) Document, particularly in administrative, police and hospital records, the incidence of all types of violence;

(c) Examine the impact of the mass media, including commercial advertisements, on violence against women and promote a violence-free society.

Strategic objective D.3. Adopt special measures to eliminate trafficking in women and to assist female victims of violence

Actions to be taken

99. By Governments:

(a) Enforce the international conventions on trafficking in persons and on slavery;

(b) Protect young women and girls who may be subject to trafficking for the purpose of forced prostitution and prevent further abuse by dismantling international networks on trafficking and providing assistance to victims of trafficking;

(c) Take special measures to eradicate violence against women, particularly those in vulnerable situations, such as young women, women with disabilities and women migrant workers, including enforcing existing legislation for women migrant workers in both sending and receiving countries.

E. Effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women

100. Armed conflict has not decreased with the end of the cold war; ethnic and religious conflicts are an ongoing reality in nearly every region. Humanitarian law, prohibiting attacks on civilian populations, is systematically ignored; human rights law is being violated by armed parties. In a world of continuing instability and violence, new approaches to peace and security are urgently needed. The perspectives of women could provide a more constructive approach to the use of power and to the resolution of conflict. While women are chronically underrepresented at, if not altogether absent from, the highest levels of decision-making in matters of security and peace, they have experienced a disproportionate share of the consequences of armed conflict. If given the opportunity, women have shown an ability to resolve conflicts, at both national and international levels.

101. There is considerable evidence that women are highly skilled in negotiation, dialogue and forms of conflict resolution without the use of military force. Yet women are grossly underrepresented in decision-making positions in defence and foreign ministries, the military and police agencies, and international mediation and United Nations peace-keeping missions. If women are to play an equal part in securing and maintaining peace, they must be empowered politically and economically and represented at all levels of decision-making.

102. While not involved in decision-making, women and girls suffer the consequences of armed conflict and militarism in special ways because of their status in society and their sex. The impact of violence is experienced by women of all ages who are subjected to acts of terrorism, torture, disappearance, rape and displacement. This is compounded by the lifelong social and psychologically

traumatic consequences of armed conflict, particularly for young women and girls. Women and children constitute 80 per cent of the world's 25 million refugees and displaced persons. These women and children are deprived of goods and services and threatened by violence and insecurity. This state of affairs makes it imperative that refugee women become active partners in deciding on and assessing needs and in planning and implementing activities.

103. In order to counter the instability posed by the production and proliferation of weapons, women's non-governmental organizations have called for reductions in military expenditures world wide and for the elimination of the international weapons trade, questioning the morality of a militaristic culture and armed conflict as a means of resolving disagreements. Those most affected by massive arms transfers and expenditures on weaponry and by armed conflict are the poor, who are deprived because of the lack of investment in basic services. International policy-making bodies involved in matters of collective security should study other means to achieve security besides political rivalry and armaments.

104. Education to foster a culture of peace that upholds justice for all nations and people is essential to attaining lasting peace.

Strategic objective E.1. Increase and strengthen women's participation in decision-making and leadership in conflict resolution

Actions to be taken

105. By Governments and international and regional intergovernmental institutions:

(a) Take affirmative and corrective action to establish a critical mass and gender balance to ensure equal participation of women numerically and qualitatively in all United Nations forums and peace activities at ambassadorial and decision-making levels, including the United Nations Secretariat;

(b) Increase the percentage of women participating in United Nations forums and activities concerned with peace and security; specific targets to that end may be established;

(c) Include a significant proportion of women in all activities relating to peace-keeping, peacemaking, peace-building and preventive diplomacy, including fact-finding and observer missions, and in all stages of peace mediation and negotiations;

(d) Ensure that there is gender balance on such international bodies as the War Crimes Tribunal and the International Court of Justice.

Strategic objective E.2. Reduce and eliminate the availability of instruments of violence

Actions to be taken

106. By Governments:

(a) Increase the conversion of military resources and related industries to peaceful purposes;

(b) Undertake to explore new ways of generating new public and private financial resources, inter alia, through the appropriate reduction in excessive military expenditures including global military expenditures and arms trade, investments for arms production and acquisition, taking into consideration national security requirements, so as to allow possible allocation of additional funds for social and economic development;

(c) Register, and ultimately eliminate, weapons development, production, deployment and sales and, as a first step, expand the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms to include production, making reporting obligatory, and to include all types of weapons, such as chemical and biological weapons;

(d) Ban the use of land mines, more than 10 million of which are scattered in 64 countries globally, with an estimated cost of clearance of at least US$ 33 billion;

(e) Impose conflict damage reparations against citizens involved in the production and marketing of arms, with special penalties for illegal arms sales and transfers, particularly from North to South.

Strategic objective E.3. Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution

Actions to be taken

107. By Governments and international and regional organizations:

(a) Encourage diplomacy, peaceful negotiation and non-military approaches to conflict resolution;

(b) Ratify, if they have not done so, the 1977 Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949;

(c) Establish a special United Nations unit for third-party conflict resolution that is balanced in composition between women and men;

(d) Declare rape in the conduct of war a war crime comparable to genocide, terrorism and torture, and include provisions against rape in

article 75 of Additional Protocol I of 1977 9/ to the Geneva Conventions of 1949;

(e) Create institutions to break the cycle of violence, including war crimes trials, truth commissions and national peace commissions, and incorporate women in the steps towards national reconciliation;

(f) Add gender-sensitive traditional practices of conflict resolution and reconciliation that take into consideration local conditions, to the repertoire of peace-making procedures followed by the United Nations;

(g) Make gender-sensitive training compulsory for all personnel involved in United Nations peace-keeping operations.

Strategic objective E.4. Foster a culture of peace

Actions to be taken

108. By Governments, international and regional intergovernmental institutions and non-governmental organizations:

(a) Promote conflict resolution and peace education training in educational institutions, communities and families for all members of society. Youth exchange programmes would be particularly beneficial;

(b) Give priority in the support provided to research institutions and agencies, to programmes and projects related to peace and security that take gender into account;

(c) Ensure that specific educational programmes on women's human rights and their relation to peace are included in the implementation of the Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004); 10/

(d) Focus research by the United Nations and peace research institutes on the impact of conflict on women and on the extent, nature and effectiveness of women's participation in international, national and local peace movements; focus research on traditional mechanisms for containing violence and conflict resolution and women's perspectives on peace and security;

(e) Ensure that the United Nations disseminates the Charter of the United Nations and that the principles relating to conflict resolution are translated and integrated into educational programmes world wide;

(f) Create mechanisms to address the social and psychological consequences of armed conflict on women, particularly young women and girls;

(g) Create national civilian commissions, in which men and women are represented equally, that would open to public scrutiny all military activities, expenditures, research and development

Strategic objective E.5. Provide assistance and training to refugee and displaced women

Actions to be taken

109. By Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other institutions involved in providing assistance to refugees and displaced persons, especially the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme:

(a) Ensure that women are involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all short-term and long-term projects and programmes providing assistance to women refugees and displaced persons, including the management of refugee camps and resources;

(b) Take steps to guarantee the physical safety of refugee and displaced women, both during their displacement and on their return;

(c) Provide emergency relief that takes into account the specific needs of women;

(d) Apply international norms to ensure equal rights and access of women to refugee determination procedures and the granting of asylum. Consider gender factors in recognizing as refugees those women whose claim to refugee status is based on a well-founded fear of persecution, for reasons enumerated in the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees 11/ and the 1967 Protocol; 12/

(e) Focus all programmes on promoting the self-reliant capacities of refugee women and their human rights, including all rights related to their status as refugees;

(f) Ensure that the human rights of refugee women, including all rights related to their status as refugees and their right to family reunification, are recognized;

(g) Adopt special measures to provide refugee women of all ages with vocational/professional training programmes aimed at integrating them into the labour market; include in those programmes language training, small-scale enterprise development training, family planning and counselling on domestic violence;

(h) Encourage and provide special programmes for women, particularly young women, in leadership and decision-making training within refugee and returnee communities;

(i) Raise public awareness through the mass media, education and special programmes in order to create a better understanding and tolerance of refugees and displaced persons.

F. Inequality in women's access to and participation in the definition of economic structures and policies and the productive process itself

110. Women's participation in economic life significantly increased during the past decade as women became the workers of choice in many industries and predominant in small and medium-sized enterprises. Nevertheless, women remain underrepresented in economic decision-making at both national and international levels. Similarly, women are largely absent from the policy formulation process in the multilateral institutions that define the terms of structural adjustment programmes, loans and grants. Discriminatory education and training and hiring and promotion practices, inflexible working conditions and inadequate sharing of family responsibilities continue to restrict women's employment, professional opportunities and mobility in the formal sector. Moreover, attitudinal obstacles inhibit women's participation in economic decision-making and restrict girls' access to education and training for economic management. Conversely, there has been a growth in women's self-reliant activities in the informal sector, based on their initiatives, knowledge, capacities and skills and their creative and innovative approaches to financing, marketing and management.

111. Legal and customary barriers to ownership of or access to land, natural resources, capital, technology and other means of production contribute to impeding the economic progress of women. The value of women's unremunerated contribution to the economy, whether in family enterprises, community service or domestic work, remains unrecognized and is therefore not reflected in national accounts.

112. The globalization of the economy is undermining women's self-reliant initiatives with respect to savings, production and trade. The international and sexual division of labour has reinforced the segregation of women into a limited number of occupations. This trend has been characterized by low wages, low skill levels and a lack of job security, in both the formal and informal sectors. Young and migrant female workers remain the least protected by labour and immigration laws. Women, particularly young women, have limited employment opportunities because of inflexible working conditions and inadequate sharing of domestic responsibilities, including the care of children and the elderly.

113. In transnational and national enterprises women are largely absent from management and decision-making levels, denoting discriminatory hiring and promotion policies and practices which reflect attitudinal prejudice. Consequently, women have increasingly become owners and managers of small and medium-sized enterprises. This expansion of the informal sector is due in large part to women, whose collaborative, self-help and traditional practices represent a valuable economic resource. When given access to and control over credit, resources, technology and training, women can increase production, marketing and income to ensure sustainable livelihoods.

Strategic objective F.1. Secure economic rights for women

Actions to be taken

114. By Governments:

(a) Devise mechanisms that provide women with access to and participation in the definition of economic structures and policies through such organizations as ministries of finance, national economic commissions and economic research institutes;

(b) Reform commercial and property laws to provide women with full access to, ownership of and control over natural and economic resources, as well as technical services and the returns from their own economic activity;

(c) Reform laws governing the operation of financial institutions to provide services to women on the same basis as men;

(d) Revise and enact national policies that support the traditional savings and lending mechanisms of women;

(e) Ensure that national policies related to international and regional trade agreements protect women's new and traditional economic activities;

(f) Create flexible employment policies that facilitate the restructuring of work patterns and promote the sharing of family responsibilities;

(g) Enact equal opportunity legislation and encourage compliance in the private sector through the granting of contracts;

(h) Ensure that gender impact analyses are applied to all macroeconomic and micro-economic policies and that the results are recognized and acted upon.

Strategic objective F.2. Take positive action to facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade

Actions to be taken

115. By Governments:

(a) Create and modify programmes to provide women farmers, especially those involved in food production, with equal access to new technologies, extension services and marketing and credit facilities;

(b) Increase the proportion of women extension workers and other government personnel who provide technical assistance or administer economic programmes;

(c) Review policies and regulations to ensure that they do not discriminate against small and medium-enterprises owned by women in rural and urban areas;

(d) Establish advisory boards and other forums to enable women entrepreneurs to contribute to the formulation of policies and programmes being developed by economic ministries and banking institutions;

(e) Conduct reviews of national income tax and social security systems to eliminate any existing bias against women, including homemakers.

116. By national machinery for the advancement of women:

Analyse, advise on and coordinate policies that integrate the needs and interests of self-employed and entrepreneurial women into sectoral and inter-ministerial policies, programmes and budgets.

117. By Governments, central banks and national development banks:

(a) Provide wholesale lending, refinancing and incentives to the local banking sector and intermediaries that serve the needs of women entrepreneurs in both rural and urban areas;

(b) Structure services to reach rural and urban women involved in both small and micro enterprises, especially young women who lack access to capital and assets.

118. By Governments and non-governmental organizations:

Disseminate market, trade and resource information to women.

119. By multilateral funding organizations, such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the World Bank, regional development banks and the United Nations Capital Development Fund, as well as bilateral and private funding agencies at the international, regional and subregional levels:

(a) Review policies, programmes and projects to ensure that a higher proportion of resources reach women, especially in rural areas;

(b) Develop flexible funding arrangements to finance intermediary institutions that target women's economic activities and promote self-sufficiency and increased capacity in and profitability of women's economic enterprises.

Strategic objective F.3. Provide business services and access to markets, information and technology to low-income women

Actions to be taken

120. By Governments, non-governmental organizations at the community and national levels and the private sector:

(a) Provide communications, storage and transportation infrastructure to ensure market access for women entrepreneurs;

(b) Develop special programmes that provide training and low-cost services to women in business management, product development, financing, production and quality control, marketing and the legal aspects of business;

(c) Create special investment funds to support women's businesses and target women in trade promotion programmes;

(d) Disseminate information to girls and young women about successful women entrepreneurs and the skills necessary for such success; facilitate networking and the exchange of information;

(e) Provide support services, such as child-care facilities.

121. By local, national and international business organizations and non-governmental organizations concerned with women's issues:

Advocate, at the national level, for the promotion and support of women's businesses, including those in the informal sector, and for full access of women to productive resources.

Strategic objective F.4. Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks

Actions to be taken

122. By Governments:

(a) Adopt policies that support business organizations, non-governmental organizations, cooperatives, credit unions, grass-roots organizations and other groups to provide services to women entrepreneurs in rural and urban areas;

(b) Design special programmes for women affected by structural adjustment programmes and the transition to market economies and for women who work in the informal sector;

(c) Adopt policies that strengthen women's self-help groups and workers' associations through non-conventional forms of support;

(d) Use the research of women scientists and technologists and the indigenous knowledge of women to improve income-earning capacity.

123. By financial intermediaries, national training institutes, credit unions, non-governmental organizations, women's associations, professional organizations and the private sector:

(a) Provide training in financial management and technical skills to enable women, especially young women, to participate at the national, regional and international levels;

(b) Provide business services, including marketing and trade information, product design and innovation, technology transfer and quality control, for both the domestic and export sectors of the economy;

(c) Promote technical and commercial links and establish joint ventures among women entrepreneurs at the national, regional and international levels to support community-based initiatives;

(d) Strengthen women's production and marketing cooperatives, especially in rural areas;

(e) Invest capital and develop investment portfolios to finance women's enterprises;

(f) Support credit networks and innovative ventures, including traditional savings schemes.

124. By transnational and national corporations:

(a) Adopt policies and establish mechanisms to grant contracts on a parity basis to women who are self-employed or who are entrepreneurs;

(b) Recruit women at decision-making and management levels and in management training programmes on the same basis as men.

Strategic objective F.5. Eliminate occupational segregation and wage inequality

Actions to be taken

125. By Governments, employers, employees, trade unions and women's organizations:

(a) Incorporate international norms on the equal rights of women in the economy into national legislation, as specified in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 13/ and International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions, especially Convention No. 156 regarding workers with family responsibilities, including the protection of the rights of migrant and disabled women;

(b) Enact and enforce laws against age and sex discrimination in the labour market, hiring and promotion, and the extension of employment benefits and social security and regarding discriminatory working conditions and sexual harassment;

(c) Develop employment programmes and services for women entering the labour market, especially rural and young women and those affected by structural adjustment programmes;

(d) Implement and monitor affirmative action programmes in the recruitment and promotion of women in all sectors;

(e) Increase incentives to enterprises and expand the number of vocational and training centres that provide training for women in non-traditional areas;

(f) Provide women, especially young women, with information and professional training in non-traditional, scientific and technical careers, including areas with new economic opportunities;

(g) Develop special programmes to enable women with disabilities to obtain and retain employment;

(h) Enact legislation that ensures equal pay for equal work;

(i) Strengthen and establish legal mechanisms to adjudicate matters relating to wage discrimination;

(j) Reduce child labour by 50 per cent by the year 2000.

Strategic objective F.6. Create a flexible work environment

Actions to be taken

126. By Governments:

(a) Extend the protection of labour and social security laws to part-time and temporary jobs and to seasonal and home-based workers and enact laws to promote career development based on flexible work conditions;

(b) Enact laws that grant parental leave to both women and men and promote the sharing of responsibility for the family by men and women.

127. By Governments, the private sector and non-governmental organizations:

(a) Establish training programmes to reintegrate women into the labour market after parental leave or a career interruption;

(b) Encourage flexible work schedules;

(c) Design educational programmes to raise awareness and acceptance of shared family responsibilities;

(d) Provide on-site child care at workplaces and flexible working hours.

G. Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels

128. Despite the widespread movement towards democratization in the past decade, women have made little progress in attaining political power in legislative bodies or in achieving the target of 30 per cent women in positions at decision-making levels set by the Economic and Social Council. Although women make up at least half of the electorate in almost all countries and have had the right to vote and hold office for more than a generation, few are candidates for public office. The continuing gap between women's de jure and de facto equality, as well as their absence from power and political decision-making, is indicative of both attitudinal and structural discrimination. With the exception of the Nordic countries, where political parties and Governments have undertaken specific initiatives, only 10 per cent of the members of legislative bodies and a lower percentage of ministerial positions are now held by women globally. The discriminatory attitudes that permeate education and training, political party culture and government structures restrict women's political participation and deprive the world of women's leadership and vision. Only through the active participation of women at all levels of decision-making will equality, development and peace be achieved.

129. Women constitute over half of the electorate in almost all countries where elections are held. They have participated significantly both as voters and in political campaigns. They have also demonstrated considerable leadership skills in public office. However, socialization and negative stereotyping of women, including stereotyping through the media, affirm that power and political leadership are the domain of men. This often discourages women from seeking political office and reduces the credibility of women candidates.

130. Due to their exclusion from traditional avenues to power, such as the decision-making bodies of political parties and trade unions, women have gained access to power through alternative structures, particularly in the non-governmental organization sector. Through non-governmental organizations, women have been able to articulate their interests and concerns and have placed women's issues on the national, regional and international agendas. Consequently, there has been increased collaboration between Governments and women's organizations in decision-making processes.

131. Inequality in the public arena often starts with discriminatory attitudes and practices within the household, where power relations between men and women are first defined. A more equal sharing of domestic responsibilities and decision-making can result in greater participation for women in public life. Non-formal networks and patterns of decision-making that reflect a dominant male ethos restrict women's ability to participate equally in political and economic life.

132. The low proportion of women among economic and political decision makers at national, regional and international levels reflects structural and attitudinal barriers that need to be addressed through positive measures. Transnational and national corporations, banks, and regional and international organizations, including those in the United Nations system, have failed to recruit and promote women as top-level managers, policy makers, diplomats and negotiators.

Strategic objective G.1. Take special measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making

Actions to be taken

133. By Governments:

(a) Establish targets and mechanisms for the inclusion of women in the lists of political parties as candidates for public office and for the appointment of women to the public service at decision-making levels;

(b) Appoint women on a parity basis to public advisory boards and other bodies;

(c) Collect, analyse and disseminate quantitative and qualitative data on women at decision-making levels in the public and private sector;

(d) Support non-governmental organizations and research institutes that conduct studies on women's participation in decision-making and their impact on the decision-making environment.

134. By political parties:

(a) Adopt the goal of parity and partnership in all internal policy-making structures, maintaining the goal of 50-50 representation in all appointive and electoral nominating processes;

(b) Provide greater visibility and opportunities for leadership by women, recognizing that an important source of potential national leadership exists at the local and community levels, where women have created informal and formal networks that provide a democratic, informed and responsible base for decision-making.

135. By Governments, national bodies, the private sector, political parties, trade unions, employers' organizations, subregional and regional bodies, non-governmental and international organizations:

(a) Take affirmative action to build a critical mass of women leaders, executives and managers in strategic decision-making positions;

(b) Create regulatory bodies and enforcement mechanisms to monitor women's access to senior levels of decision-making;

(c) Monitor progress towards the Secretary-General's target of having women in 50 per cent, or at least 40 per cent, of managerial and decision-making positions by the year 2000.

136. By the United Nations:

(a) Adopt and implement existing and new policies and measures relating to all types of contracts in order to achieve complete overall gender parity in employment at the Professional level by the year 2000;

(b) Adopt affirmative action measures to achieve gender balance in all committees by the year 2000;

(c) Continue to collect and disseminate quantitative and qualitative data on women in decision-making and analyse the differential impact on decision-making by women in the public and private sectors.

137. By women's organizations, non-governmental organizations, trade unions, political parties and professional organizations:

Mobilize women to organize, support and advocate on behalf of candidates committed to implementing the Platform for Action before the year 2000.

Strategic objective G.2. Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership

Actions to be taken

138. By Governments, national bodies, the private sector, political parties, trade unions, employers' organizations, subregional and regional bodies, and non-governmental and international organizations:

(a) Restructure recruitment and career-development programmes to ensure that women, especially young women, have equal access to managerial, entrepreneurial, technical and leadership training, including on-the-job training;

(b) Develop programmes for career advancement for women through career planning, tracking, mentoring and coaching;

(c) Provide gender-sensitive training for men and women to promote non-sexist working relationships and respect for diversity in work and management styles.

139. By women's organizations, non-governmental organizations and trade unions:

(a) Organize women to use their purchasing power as consumers to determine national economic policies;

(b) Advocate at all levels to enable women to influence political and economic decisions, processes and systems;

(c) Establish databases on women and their qualifications for use in appointing women to senior decision-making and advisory positions and for dissemination to Governments, international organizations and private enterprises.

H. Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women

140. National machineries for the advancement of women have been established in almost every Member State. Created to advocate, implement, monitor and mobilize support for policies that promote the advancement of women, national machineries are diverse in form and uneven in their effectiveness. Often marginalized in national government structures, these mechanisms are hampered by unclear mandates; lack of staff, training, adequate data and sufficient resources; and the absence of unequivocal support from national leadership. At the international level, mechanisms to promote the advancement of women as an integral part of mainstream political, development or human rights initiatives encounter similar problems emanating from a lack of commitment at the highest levels.

141. Successive international conferences have demonstrated the need to take gender factors into account in policy and programme planning. Regional bodies concerned with the advancement of women have been strengthened, together with international machinery, such as the Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Methodologies for incorporating women's concerns in policies and programmes and dealing with the differential effects of policies on women and men have been developed in many organizations and are available for application.

Strategic objective H.1. Create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies

Actions to be taken

142. By Governments:

(a) Create, where it does not exist, national machinery for the advancement of women that has clearly defined mandates, political commitment, the ability to influence policy and the functions of advocacy, policy analysis, communication, coordination and monitoring;

(b) Provide staff trained in both gender and managerial skills to carry out policy analysis, negotiation, communication and design and to monitor activities;

(c) Establish procedures to allow the machinery to gather relevant information on policy issues at an early stage and apply it in the policy development process within government.

143. By national machinery:

(a) Establish cooperative relationships with members of parliament, centres for women's studies and research, private sector bodies, private enterprises and non-governmental organizations;

(b) Establish direct international links with other national machineries and with international bodies;

(c) Provide training and advisory assistance to government agencies to integrate gender perspectives into their policies;

(d) Report periodically to the parliament and the cabinet.

144. By international organizations, especially the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and bilateral donors:

(a) Provide advisory and financial assistance to national machinery to increase the ability to gather information, develop networks and undertake gender analysis;

(b) Strengthen international mechanisms to promote the advancement of women.

Strategic objective H.2. Integrate women's concerns in all public policies

Actions to be taken

145. By Governments:

(a) Regularly review policies and projects to ensure that they reflect the costs and benefits of women's contribution to the economy and society and take into account the impact of policies on women's situation with regard to employment and earning policies;

(b) Require officials to apply gender analysis in developing policies and programmes and to provide training to the staff in the areas of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects;

(c) Establish networks of focal points in all ministries and agencies with a mandate to review policies and programmes and create mechanisms for the focal points to meet regularly with national machinery to monitor progress in the implementation of the Platform for Action.

Strategic objective H.3. Generate and disseminate gender disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation

Actions to be taken

146. By national and international statistical services, in cooperation with research organizations, in their respective areas of responsibility:

(a) Collect data disaggregated by age, sex and socio-economic indicators for utilization in policy planning and implementation;

(b) Integrate centres for women's studies and research in defining new indicators and in monitoring the goals of the Platform for Action;

(c) Ensure that all statistics related to individuals are collected, analysed and presented by sex and age and reflect problems and questions related to men and women in society;

(d) Designate staff to strengthen the structure and programmes of gender statistics and ensure their close link to all fields of statistical work by coordinating and monitoring this work and preparing outputs that integrate statistics from the various subject areas;

(e) Improve the concepts and methods of data collection on and the measurement of the full contribution of women and men to the economy by taking steps to improve the measurement of their participation in the informal sector, agriculture and, in particular, small holdings, industry, trade and the domestic service sector, and to quantify the remunerated and unremunerated work of women and men, including housework and child care;

(f) Develop an international classification of activities for time-use statistics, with Governments also undertaking time-use studies, and develop further work at the national level to prepare satellite accounts of women's and men's economic contribution to production and income;

(g) Improve concepts and methods of data collection on the measurement of poverty among women and men, including their access to resources;

(h) Strengthen vital statistical systems and incorporate gender analysis into publications and research; give priority to gender differences in research design and in data collection and analysis to improve data on morbidity; and improve data collection on access to health services, including access to comprehensive maternal care and family planning, giving special priority to adolescent mothers.

147. By Governments:

(a) Produce a statistical publication on gender that presents and interprets topical data on women and men in a form suitable for a wide range of non-technical users;

(b) Organize a review by producers and users of statistics in each country to assess the adequacy of the official statistical system and the coverage of gender issues and prepare a plan for needed improvements;

(c) Develop statistics and qualitative studies on the sharing of power and influence in society, including the number of women and men in senior positions in decision-making in both the public and private sectors;

(d) Use more gender-sensitive data in policy formulation.

148. By the United Nations:

(a) Promote the development of statistical methods to improve data that may relate to women's human rights, including violence against women, for use by the Commission on Human Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and other human rights treaty bodies;

(b) Prepare a new issue of The World's Women at regular five-year intervals;

(c) Assist countries in the development of gender statistics programmes and outputs;

(d) Report on progress at the national and international levels to the United Nations Statistical Commission and the Commission on the Status of Women in a coordinated fashion.

I. Lack of awareness of and commitment to internationally and nationally recognized women's human rights

149. Universal respect of the indivisible and inalienable human rights of women of all ages is the basis for all efforts for the advancement of women. In most countries, steps have been taken to reflect these rights in national law; in others, however, these human rights' instruments are being undermined by reservations that conflict with their object and purpose. Unless women's human rights, as defined by international conventions and standards, are fully applied, interpreted and enforced in civil, penal and commercial codes and administrative rules and regulations, they will exist only in name. In many countries, lack of awareness of one's rights and of how to exercise them remains a considerable obstacle to women's access to full and equal human rights.

150. The World Conference on Human Rights reaffirmed clearly that the human rights of women throughout the life cycle are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. The International Conference on

Population and Development reaffirmed women's reproductive rights and the right to development. Both the Declaration of the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of the Child guarantee children's rights and uphold the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of gender. Three quarters of the States Members of the United Nations have become parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. An increasing number of countries have established mechanisms to enable women to exercise their rights.

151. In countries that have not become party to the Convention or where serious reservations have been entered, or where national laws have not been modified to comply with international norms, women's de jure equality is not yet secured. Unresponsive legal systems, overly complex administrative procedures, insensitive judicial personnel and inadequate monitoring of the violation of the human rights of women undermine women's access to full and equal rights. Lack of enforcement of civil, penal and commercial codes or administrative rules and regulations have undermined women's access to the protection offered under international human rights instruments.

152. Furthermore, the lack of appropriate recourse mechanisms at the national and international levels and inadequate resources for institutions monitoring the violation of the human rights of women at the international level, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, compounds the problem.

153. Changes in both men's and women's knowledge, attitudes and behaviour are necessary conditions for achieving harmonious partnerships between women and men. It is essential to improve communication between women and men on issues of shared responsibility, including sexuality and reproductive health, so that women and men are equal partners in public and private life. Special efforts are needed to emphasize men's shared responsibility and promote their active involvement in responsible parenthood and sexual and reproductive behaviour.

154. Special emphasis should be placed on the prevention of violence against women and children. Any form of violence against women, in private and public life, or experienced as a result of armed conflict, is an abrogation of international human rights law.

155. Women in particularly vulnerable circumstances such as migrant, refugee or displaced women or those from minority or indigenous groups, are often disadvantaged and marginalized by their lack of knowledge and recognition of their basic human rights and the absence of recourse mechanisms to redress violations of their rights.

156. Legal literacy programmes and media strategies have been effective in helping women understand the link between their rights and other aspects of their lives and in demonstrating that cost-effective initiatives can be undertaken to help women obtain those rights.

Strategic objective I.1. Implement fully the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and other human rights instruments

Actions to be taken

157. By Governments:

(a) Ratify or accede to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, if they have not yet done so, without reservations, so that universal ratification is achieved by 2000;

(b) Report on the schedule for implementation of the Convention to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, following fully the guidelines established by the Committee and involving non-governmental organizations in the preparation of the report;

(c) Include gender aspects in reporting on all other human rights conventions, as well as those of the ILO;

(d) Revise the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women to grant the Committee adequate meeting time to complete its mandate;

(e) Review any substantive reservations entered to the Convention with a view to having all reservations removed before 2000;

(f) Adopt an optional protocol to the Convention to establish a communications procedure that can enter into force before 2000;

(g) Implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child to ensure equal rights for girls and boys.

158. By the High Commissioner for Human Rights:

(a) In the exercise of his/her mandate to promote universal respect for and observance of all human rights, give full and equal consideration to the human rights of women;

(b) Ensure the inclusion of gender issues in his/her activities with regard to advisory services, technical assistance, coordination, public information and human rights education;

(c) Monitor the work of all human rights bodies and mechanisms and their secretariats to ensure that women's human rights are duly taken into account and that coordination is achieved among them in that respect;

(d) Ensure a gender perspective in national programmes of action and in human rights and democratic institutions, within the context of human rights advisory services programmes.

Strategic objective I.2. Ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law

Actions to be taken

159. By Governments:

(a) Provide and guarantee constitutions that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex and assure women of all ages full and equal citizenship;

(b) Adopt, where necessary, equal opportunity legislation to give practical effect to constitutional guarantees;

(c) Complete national law reviews by 2000 in order to incorporate the principles and provisions of accepted international norms and standards into national legislation and to revoke any remaining discriminatory laws;

(d) Provide gender sensitivity and women's human rights training for all public officials, including law enforcement officers, legal and medical personnel, members of parliament and social workers, so that they may better exercise their public responsibilities;

(e) Strengthen or establish alternative administrative mechanisms and legal aid programmes to assist disadvantaged women seeking redress for violations of their rights;

(f) Strengthen and encourage the development of independent national institutions on human rights, such as human rights commissions or ombudspersons, and accord them appropriate status, resources and access to the Government to assist individuals in ensuring their human rights.

Strategic objective I.3. Achieve legal literacy

Actions to be taken

160. By Governments and non-governmental organizations:

(a) Translate into local languages, publicize and disseminate laws and information relating to human rights, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Vienna Declaration adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, 14/ particularly that section relating to the equal status and human rights of women;

(b) Include human rights education in school curricula and undertake public campaigns for girls and boys, and adolescents in particular, in the most widely used languages of the country, on the equality of

women and men and on women's human rights and the instruments available to ensure them.

J. Insufficient mobilization of the mass media to promote women's positive contributions to society

161. During the past decade, advances in information technology have facilitated the development of international media organizations that transcend national boundaries and have the power to shape public policy and private attitudes. These media offer the promise of greater interaction among people, rapid exchange of knowledge and accessible sources of education. They can, on the one hand, be powerful tools for development and social progress or, on the other, reinforce exploitative stereotypes, particularly of women. In many countries women are working to make the mass media more sensitive to women's reality and to the emerging roles of both women and men. Everywhere the potential exists for the media to make a far greater contribution to the advancement of women in society and to the public's acceptance of women's true roles.

162. There has been an increase in the number of women involved in the communications industries, but not at the decision-making levels. Their lack of power and influence in the organizations that employ them, mainly at the writing and production levels, is evidenced by the failure to eliminate the sex-based stereotyping that characterizes so much of the output of the major international media organizations.

163. The continued projection of out-of-date images of women in the global media system is now overdue for correction. Print and broadcast media in most countries still do not provide an accurate picture of women's roles and value in a changing world. There is still too great a reliance on programming that includes images of violence and dominance, with women invariably portrayed as victims. Foreign-produced programming is often culturally damaging, with negative impact on both the perception of women's roles and behaviour and the cultural identity of audiences. The world-wide trend towards privatization and commercialization has created a climate of consumerism in which advertisements and commercial messages portray women primarily as consumers, and young women and girls are often specific targets of inappropriate commercial messages.

164. At another level, women have used the expanding electronic information highways to link up with each other and to establish networks that provide them with alternative sources of information. This will strengthen their ability to combat negative portrayals of women internationally and to challenge the power of an industry that is outside public control and is self-regulatory.

Strategic objective J.1. Increase and enhance the access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the mass media

Actions to be taken

165. By Governments:

(a) Promote women's equal participation in the mass media, including equal participation in production, education, training and research;

(b) Appoint women on a parity basis to all advisory, management or monitoring bodies connected to the national mass media;

(c) Strengthen and recognize women's media networks as intermediaries for the dissemination of information to and about women.

166. By national machinery for the advancement of women:

(a) Develop programmes and train women to produce information for the mass media, including funding of experimental efforts;

(b) Train women in the use of information technology for communication and the mass media, whether public or private;

(c) Elaborate codes of conduct and other forms of self-regulation to ensure realistic and affirmative portrayals of women by the media and to increase the participation of women in production.

167. By non-governmental organizations:

(a) Establish media watchdog groups that can monitor the mass media in terms of presentation of women and women's concerns;

(b) Make greater use of information technology for communication.

Strategic objective J.2. Promote a positive portrayal of women in the mass media

Actions to be taken

168. By Governments and international organizations:

(a) Promote research and awareness campaigns aimed at facilitating positive and realistic images of women and girls through the media;

(b) Encourage media and advertisers to develop specific programmes to raise awareness about the Platform for Action, including poverty, education, health, violence and human rights and their impact on women.

169. By mass media and advertising organizations:

Establish codes of conduct and other forms of self-regulation to promote the presentation of positive and realistic images of women.

170. By mass media and non-governmental organizations in collaboration with national machinery for the advancement of women:

(a) Conduct systematic educational programmes and seminars to disseminate information on the sharing of responsibilities in the family;

(b) Produce and/or disseminate media materials on women leaders, managers and entrepreneurs as role models, particularly for young women;

(c) Develop and finance new alternative media and the use of electronic communications to disseminate information to and about women and their concerns.

K. Lack of adequate recognition and support for women's contribution to managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment

171. Awareness of resource depletion, the degradation of natural systems and the dangers of polluting substances increased markedly in the past decade. All regions of the world are adversely affected by accelerated resource depletion and environmental degradation due to drought, desertification, deforestation, natural disasters, pollution from toxic wastes and the aftermath of the use of unsuitable agro-chemical products. Wars, civil strife and armed conflicts, population density and wasteful consumption have all contributed to the worsening environmental conditions. The genetic manipulation of life forms poses serious ecological and health risks. Many ecosystems that are reservoirs of considerable ecological and biological diversity are under threat. These worsening conditions are destroying fragile ecosystems, are displacing communities, especially women, from productive activities and are an interregional abrogation of the right to a safe and healthy environment.

172. Women, however, remain largely absent from decision-making in environmental management, protection and rehabilitation. The experience and skills of women in advocacy for, and monitoring of proper natural resource management remain marginalized in policy-making and decision-making bodies.

173. Women, particularly indigenous women, have pivotal roles in environmental conservation, owing to their combined roles and responsibilities in the family and the community, their knowledge of ecological links and fragile ecosystem management and their concern for the quality and sustainability of life for present and future generations. In certain regions, women are generally the most stable members of the community, as men often migrate seasonally, leaving women to safeguard environmental integrity and ensure adequate resource allocation within the household and community.

174. There is a link between poverty and deteriorating natural environments. In both urban and rural areas, environmental degradation results in negative effects on the health, well-being and quality of life of women and youth, especially young girls, women in displaced populations (such as refugees), farm workers, rural women, women in poor households and households in remote areas or areas with harsh ecological conditions. In many regions, women have played leadership roles by promoting an environmental ethic, changing values, and reducing, reusing and recycling resources to reduce waste and excessive consumption. In addition, women's contribution to environmental management has taken place at the local level, where decentralized action on environmental issues is most needed and most decisive.

175. Women's lack of decision-making power means that their roles as environmental managers are often invisible. Women are rarely trained as professional natural resource managers with policy-making capacities (e.g., agriculturalists, foresters, marine scientists and land-use planners). They are underrepresented in formal institutions, especially managerial positions in environment-related agencies. Furthermore, there are institutional weaknesses in coordination between women's non-governmental organizations and national institutions dealing with environmental issues, despite the recent rapid growth and visibility of women's non-governmental organizations working on these issues at all levels.

176. The strategic actions needed for sound environmental management require a holistic, multidisciplinary and intersectoral approach. Women's participation and leadership is essential to every aspect of that approach. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the International Conference on Population and Development, as well as regional preparatory conferences for the Fourth World Conference on Women, have acknowledged that environmental policies that do not involve women will not succeed in the long run. They have called for the effective participation of women in the generation of knowledge and in decision-making and management at all levels. Women's perspectives, experiences and contributions to an ecologically sound environment must therefore be part of the agenda for the twenty-first century. As long as there is inadequate recognition and support for women's contribution to environmental management, sustainable development will be an elusive goal.

Strategic objective K.1. Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels

Actions to be taken

177. By Governments:

(a) Enact and enforce laws to control pollution and toxicity, particulary in the home and the workplace, and the genetic manipulation of life-forms;

(b) Mandate the inclusion of women as decision makers, managers, designers, planners, implementers and evaluators of environmental projects;

(c) Evaluate policies and programmes in terms of environmental impact and women's access to and use of natural resources;

(d) Ensure that indigenous women's knowledge and skills, including those concerning traditional medicines, biodiversity, and indigenous technologies, are protected and that their rights over intellectual property are safeguarded.

178. By Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations:

(a) Include gender impact studies in the policy development, analysis and monitoring work of the Commission on Sustainable Development;

(b) Involve women and incorporate a gender perspective in the design and approval of projects funded under the Global Environment Facility and other international projects;

(c) Design projects in the four areas of concern to the Global Environmental Facility to allocate resources to women and projects managed by women, especially in the area of biological diversity;

(d) Include women as decision makers and managers in environment and natural resource projects and programmes on an equal basis within their organizations.

179. By non-governmental organizations and private sector institutions:

Assume an advocacy role on issues relating to the environment and provide information on resource mobilization for environmental protection.

Strategic objective K.2. Ensure integration of women's needs, concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for the environment and sustainable development

Actions to be taken

180. By Governments:

(a) Integrate rural women's indigenous knowledge of sustainable resource use in the development of environmental management and extension programmes;

(b) Sponsor research on the role of women in soil conservation, irrigation and watershed management, coastal zone management, integrated pest management, land-use planning, forest conservation and community forestry, focusing particularly on indigenous women;

(c) Study the barriers to women's effective participation in environmentally sustainable development and the impact of these

barriers on women's capacities as managers of the environment and natural resources;

(d) Promote the education of young women and girls in science, technology and economics, so they can make informed choices, offer informed input and participate in determining local economic, scientific and environmental priorities for the management of local resources and ecosystems;

(e) Develop programmes to involve female professionals and experts - scientists, economists, educators, trainers, engineers, extension workers, etc. - in environmental management through the training of girls and women in these fields, accelerated hiring and promotion of women in these fields and other temporary special measures to advance women's expertise and participation in these activities;

(f) Identify and promote environmentally sound technologies that have been designed, developed and improved in consultation with women and that are appropriate to both women and specific ecosystems and environments;

(g) Ensure women's access to safe, sustainable and affordable energy technologies.

181. By international organizations, non-governmental organizations and private sector institutions:

(a) Involve women in the mass media in the development of consumer awareness related to environmental issues;

(b) Establish a code of ethics on advertising and the environment;

(c) Conduct educational campaigns to encourage women to use their purchasing power as consumers to promote the production of environmentally safe products and encourage them to invest in environmentally sound and productive agricultural, commercial and industrial activities.

Strategic objective K.3. Establish mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women

Actions to be taken

182. By Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations:

(a) Facilitate collaborative capacity-building in environmental management and sustainable development at international and national levels by incorporating gender and environmental analyses into existing

sustainable development programmes to provide a systematic methodology for examining the different impacts of development interventions on women and men and on ecosystems and the environment;

(b) Develop gender-sensitive databases, information systems and participatory action-oriented research, methodologies and policy analyses with the collaboration of academic institutions and local women researchers on the following:

(i) Knowledge and experience on the part of women of the management and conservation of natural resources for incorporation in the databases and information systems for sustainable development;

(ii) The impact on women of environmental degradation, particulary drought, desertification, toxic chemicals and armed conflicts;

(iii) Analysis of the structural links between gender relations, environment and development, with special emphasis on particular sectors, such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry, environmental health and biological diversity;

(iv) Measures to develop and include environmental, social and gender impact analyses as an essential step in the development and monitoring of programmes and policies;

(v) Programmes to create rural and urban training, research and resource centres in developing countries that will disseminate environmentally sound technologies to women;

(c) Promote new operating modalities and programme coordination within and among institutions to implement the Platform for Action and chapter 24 of Agenda 21 and to promote capacity-building in environmental management and sustainable development;

(d) Promote intersectoral cooperation between environmental issues and other interrelated women's issues;

(e) Require the Commission on Sustainable Development to monitor and evaluate periodically the implementation of Agenda 21 with regard to women and the environment.

V. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

183. The Platform for Action establishes a set of actions that should lead to fundamental change. Immediate action and accountability are essential if the targets are to be met by the year 2000. Implementation depends on a wide range of institutions in the public, private and non-governmental sectors at the community, national, regional and international levels.

184. During the United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985) many institutions specifically devoted to the advancement of women were established at the national and international levels.

185. At the national level, a number of countries established or strengthened national mechanisms to plan, advocate for and monitor progress in the advancement of women.

186. At the international level, two entities for women were established as a direct result of the first United Nations women's conference (Mexico City, 1975) - the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). Following the entry into force of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1981, a committee was established in 1982 to monitor the Convention. These entities, along with the Commission on the Status of Women and its secretariat, the Division for the Advancement of Women, became the main institutions in the United Nations devoted to women's advancement globally.

187. In 1993, the Secretary-General submitted to the Economic and Social Council a proposal for the merger of INSTRAW and UNIFEM, based upon a recommendation made by a high-level panel of advisers on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the Organization. This proposal was subsequently elaborated by a task force established by the Secretary-General. It was aimed at strengthening the programmes for the advancement of women and enhancing the efficiency of the work of those organizations in terms of function, structure and cost-effectiveness.

188. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1994/51, which was adopted by consensus at its resumed substantive session of 1994 recommended, inter alia, that the General Assembly request the Council to re-examine the issue of the merger at a resumed session to take place after the Fourth World Conference on Women, taking into account the deliberations of the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-ninth session and the Fourth World Conference on Women concerning the institutional arrangements in the United Nations system for the advancement of women. The Council further recommended that the General Assembly take a final decision on the proposed merger at its fiftieth session, in view of the recommendations of the Council and the deliberations of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Fourth World Conference on Women.

189. Implementation of the Platform for Action by national and international institutions, both public and private, would be facilitated by transparency and a consistent flow of information among all concerned. Clear objectives and accountability mechanisms are required. Links with other institutions at the national, regional and international levels and with networks and organizations devoted to the advancement of women, including non-governmental and grass-roots organizations, are needed.

190. Effective implementation will also require changes in values, behaviour, rules and procedures, including efforts to achieve equal opportunities in employment and promotion. Changing the internal dynamics of power and the

organizational culture are the key to sustaining institutions and integrating women effectively. In particular, sexual harassment should be eliminated.

191. Institutions should have strong mandates and the authority, resources and accountability mechanisms needed to carry out the tasks set out in the Platform for Action. Their methods of operation should ensure efficient and effective implementation of the Platform. There should be a clear commitment to international norms and standards of equality between men and women as a basis for all actions.

A. National level

192. Governments have the primary responsibility for implementing the Platform for Action. Commitment at the highest political level is essential to its implementation, and Governments should take a leading role in coordinating, monitoring and assessing progress in the advancement of women.

193. The active involvement of a broad and diverse range of other institutional actors should be encouraged, including legislative bodies, academic and research institutions, professional associations, trade unions, cooperatives, local community groups, women's organizations, the media, non-governmental organizations, youth organizations, cultural groups, and financial and other for-profit organizations. Governments should coordinate with various institutions and organizations in formulating and carrying out an implementation strategy.

194. Implementation of the Platform for Action requires actions to establish or strengthen national mechanisms for the advancement of women, national statistical services, ministerial focal points and other institutions with the mandate and capacity to integrate women's concerns into policy. The first step in this process for all institutions should be to review their objectives, programmes and operational procedures in terms of the actions called for in the Platform.

195. National mechanisms and institutions for the advancement of women should assist in public policy formulation and encourage the implementation of the Platform for Action through various bodies and institutions and, where necessary, act as a catalyst in developing new programmes in areas that are not covered by existing institutions.

196. Governments should establish an implementation mechanism to monitor and report on the implementation of the Platform. They should draw on persons from the highest level of authority in government, from national parliaments and from academia, the private sector and non-governmental organizations. The implementation mechanism should be a national plan of action with time-bound targets and implementation and monitoring mechanisms. Responsible institutions need to be identified and budgetary resources allocated for its implementation. There should be participation by the international community, and non-governmental organizations should assist in the design, implementation and monitoring of the national plan of action. Non-governmental organizations are encouraged to develop their own programmes to implement the Platform for Action.

Reports on implementation of the Platform should be reviewed by legislative bodies on a regular basis. At the country level, UNDP, through its network of field offices and resident coordinators, should facilitate the efforts of the United Nations system towards gender equity in development and capacity-building and should support the implementation of the Platform for Action.

197. Governments should ensure gender parity between men and women in all national committees, boards and other official bodies.

B. Regional level

198. The regional commissions of the United Nations and other regional structures should promote and monitor the implementation of the global Platform for Action within the regional context, in close collaboration with the Commission on the Status of Women and other entities in the United Nations system dealing with women's issues.

199. The women's units/focal points at the regional commissions should be given appropriate status and the resources to provide support to the regional monitoring, implementation and evaluation process and to coordinate with the system as a whole.

200. The United Nations regional commissions should collaborate on gender issues with other regional intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, financial and research institutions and the private sector. Each region should prepare a regional implementation plan for the Platform for Action in collaboration with relevant regional or subregional intergovernmental organizations in each region, such as the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of American States, the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Nordic Council, as well as with development banks, regional non-governmental organizations and the regional offices of bodies and specialized agencies of the United Nations system.

201. Regional non-governmental organizations and other regional structures should continue the development of networks to coordinate advocacy and dissemination of information about the global Platform for Action and the respective regional platforms or plans of action.

C. International level

202. The institutional and financial capacity of the United Nations to carry out its responsibility for implementation of the Platform for Action should be strengthened.

203. In following up the Fourth World Conference on Women, Secretariat entities focusing on the advancement of women should have the necessary resources to carry out follow-up activities and should collaborate closely with other entities and organizations of the United Nations system, including the focal

points on women in the regional commissions, specialized agencies, financial institutions, funds and programmes, as well as with national and regional mechanisms.

204. The capacity of the entities devoted to promoting the advancement of women, should be enhanced and the efforts of gender focal points within organizations should be well integrated into overall policy, planning, programming and budgeting.

205. Steps should be taken by organizations at the international level, including the United Nations, to eliminate barriers to the advancement of women, and to make the changes required in the dynamics of power and the organizational culture in order to carry out both the spirit and the letter of the Platform for Action.

206. Relevant aspects of the Platform need to be implemented through the work of all of the organs of the United Nations system during the period 1995-2000, both specifically and as an integral part of wider programming. Gender issues will be addressed in connection with the Agenda for Peace, and the Agenda for Development and in implementing the results of global conferences, such as the World Conference on Education for All, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the International Conference on Nutrition, the World Conference on Human Rights, the World Summit for Children, the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II).

1. Commission on the Status of Women

207. The Commission on the Status of Women is the intergovernmental focal point for implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. As the policy coordinating body on the advancement of women, it will have the central role in monitoring the implementation of the Platform for Action. It should have a clear mandate to permit it to undertake regular monitoring and to enable it to coordinate the reporting on implementation of the Platform for Action.

208. The original mandate of the Commission on the Status of Women was to promote women's rights, with the objective of implementing the principle that men and women should have equal rights, and to develop proposals for achieving this objective. The Commission's mandate should enable it to review the gender dimensions of all relevant issues, including those taken up in other intergovernmental bodies. To help formulate and monitor a system-wide approach to implementation, it should receive monitoring reports, including reports from organizations and agencies of the United Nations system. The effect of this would be to make the Commission the gender analysis arm of the Economic and Social Council. This would help strengthen the Council's policy coordination function.

209. At its fortieth session, in 1996, the Commission needs to develop an implementation plan for the United Nations system, based on proposals from all

relevant agencies, programmes and organizations of the United Nations system, in particular those entities specifically concerned with the advancement of women, such as the Division for the Advancement of Women.

210. The Commission, in developing its work programme for the period 1996-2000, should review the critical areas of concern in the Platform for Action and add to its agenda an item on gender analysis of critical issues before the United Nations, the content of which would be determined by the issues being taken up by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, or by subsidiary bodies of the Council (e.g. in the Commission on Human Rights, the Commission on Population and Development, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the Commission on Sustainable Development). Under the existing item on programming and coordination matters, there is a need to include in the discussion a more detailed review of the programmes of all of the main United Nations bodies dealing with issues related to the Platform for Action and related aspects of other global conferences in the context of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, to be revised after the Fourth World Conference on Women.

2. Division for the Advancement of Women

211. The primary function of the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development is providing substantive servicing to the Commission on the Status of Women and other intergovernmental bodies when they are concerned with the advancement of women. It also services the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. It has been designated a focal point for the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. It should be the focal point for the implementation of the Platform for Action. In keeping with resolution 37/9 of the Commission on the Status of Women, 15/ necessary steps should be taken to strengthen the Division and maintain its identity and status and to ensure adequate resources on an ongoing basis.

212. The Division should undertake gender analysis in preparing policy studies for the Commission on the Status of Women and other subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, for the Economic and Social Council itself and for the General Assembly. After the Fourth World Conference on Women it should take the lead in preparing the revision of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women for the period 1996-2001 and should continue serving as the secretariat for inter-agency coordination for the advancement of women, based on the network of gender focal points in the United Nations system. It should undertake the additional function of maintaining a flow of information with non-governmental organizations, national commissions and national institutions for the advancement of women with regard to implementation of the Platform for Action.

3. International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

213. In conformity with its mandates in research, training and the dissemination of information for the advancement of women, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) should review its work programme in the light of the Platform for Action, which, together with Agenda 21, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, will provide guidelines for the development of a programme for implementing those aspects of the Platform for Action that fall within its mandate. It should identify those types of research and research methodologies to be given priority, strengthen national capacities to carry out gender research, and develop networks of research institutions that can be mobilized for that purpose. It should identify those types of training that can effectively be supported and promoted by the Institute, which will also serve as a focal point for gender training in the United Nations system as a whole.

4. United Nations Development Fund for Women

214. As an autonomous fund in association with UNDP, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) increases options and opportunities for women's economic and social development in developing countries. UNIFEM should review its work programme in the light of the Platform for Action and, on that basis, develop a programme for implementing those aspects of the Platform for Action that fall within its mandate. UNIFEM should be strengthened so that it can effectively undertake strategic interventions to assist and collaborate with a range of development partners in providing technical and financial capacity to incorporate the women's dimension into development at all levels. Its advocacy role should be increased by fostering international awareness of women's empowerment. Adequate resources for carrying out its functions should be made available.

5. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

215. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in implementing its responsibilities under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, should make a special effort to assess the extent to which the States parties are implementing the Platform for Action in terms of the Convention. It should continue to review the articles of the Convention, giving priority to those that are particularly crucial for implementation of the Platform, such as article 4, and make recommendations accordingly.

216. The Committee should increase its coordination with other human rights treaty bodies, and in implementing the recommendations in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, should take discrimination on the basis of sex into account in all of its work, drawing on resources allocated for this purpose.

6. General Assembly

217. The General Assembly should promote policies for the effective implementation of the Platform for Action, recognizing that women's issues cut across social, political and economic policy. At its fiftieth session, in 1995, the General Assembly will examine a report on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, taking into account recommendations of the Conference, in accordance with Assembly resolution 49/161. In 1996, and every other year thereafter to the year 2000, it should review the implementation of the Platform.

7. Economic and Social Council

218. The Economic and Social Council should review the implementation of the Platform for Action by examining the reports of the Commission on the Status of Women. The Council should incorporate gender concerns into its discussion of all policy issues, based on recommendations prepared by the Commission. It should dedicate at least one high-level segment before 2000 to the issue of advancement of women and implementation of the Platform for Action.

219. The Council should dedicate at least one coordination segment before the year 2000 to coordination of the advancement of women, based on the revised system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women.

220. The Council should dedicate at least one operational activities segment to the coordination of development activities related to gender, with a view to adopting guidelines and procedures for implementation of the Platform for Action by the funds and organizations of the United Nations system.

221. Monitoring and coordination of the implementation of the Platform for Action by organizations of the United Nations system is the responsibility of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). It should establish a procedure at the inter-agency level for monitoring system-wide coordination of the implementation of the Platform.

8. Other units of the United Nations Secretariat

222. The various units of the United Nations Secretariat should examine their programmes to determine how they can best implement the Platform for Action. Proposals for implementation of the Platform need to be reflected in the revision of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women for the period 1996-2001, as well as in the proposed United Nations medium-term plan for the period 1998-2002. The content of the actions will depend on the mandates of the bodies concerned.

223. The Office of Human Resources Management should, in collaboration with programme managers world wide, take the necessary measures to achieve the target of 50 per cent women in posts subject to geographical distribution. It should also aim to have women in at least 40 per cent of posts at the Principal Officer level and above by the year 2000. The training service should design and

conduct regular gender-sensitivity training or include gender-sensitivity training in all of its activities.

224. The Department of Public Information should expand existing programmes on women, including the weekly women's radio programme, and should establish a focal point to design and coordinate a five-year multi-media communications strategy to support the implementation of the Platform for Action, taking new technologies fully into account in its development and production. Regular outputs of the Department should also include information targeted at women, young people and grass-roots groups to promote the goals of the Platform.

225. The Statistical Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis should fully coordinate international work in statistics as described above in section IV, strategic objective H.3.

9. Specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system

226. Each organization should develop a plan of action with time-bound targets for the implementation of the Platform for Action, with a clear delineation of responsibility for its various sections and an outline of budgetary allocations and mechanisms to be established for accountability. These proposals should in turn be reflected in the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women for the period 1996-2001.

227. Each organization should take steps to enhance the roles and responsibilities of its focal points on women's issues.

228. Each organization should take steps to increase the proportion of Professional women among its staff so that at least 50 per cent are women, particularly at decision-making levels. Organizations should report regularly to their governing bodies on the implementation of all relevant aspects of the Platform for Action.

10. Other international institutions

229. International non-governmental organizations have an important role to play in implementing the Platform for Action. They should consider presenting consolidated implementation plans to the Commission on the Status of Women. Consideration should also be given to establishing a mechanism for collaborating with non-governmental organizations to monitor implementation of the Platform at various levels.

230. In implementing the Platform, international financial institutions should review and revise policies, procedures and staffing to ensure that investments and programmes benefit women and thus contribute to sustainable development. They should increase the number of women in high-level positions, increase staff training in gender analysis, and institute policies and guidelines to ensure full consideration of the differential impact of lending programmes and other activities on women and men. Closer cooperation between the Bretton Woods

institutions and other development agencies on gender issues would help to strengthen the effectiveness of the international response in this field.

231. The United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, as well as media networks and the private sector, can do a great deal to support national efforts to implement the Platform for Action. By providing information and training and by committing human and financial resources they can play a positive role as advocates to overcome local constraints and barriers to the full and equal participation of women in society.

VI. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

232. The strategic objectives can best be achieved and the required actions taken if there is a commitment to make resources available for this purpose. Financial and human resources have generally been insufficient for the advancement of women, which has also contributed to the slow progress in implementing the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies.

233. Full and effective implementation of the Platform for Action will require more effective deployment and targeting of existing resources and mobilization of additional resources from many sources. It may also require qualitative changes in existing methods and programmes that already have funding. For example, law reform and the application of special measures can largely be achieved within existing programmes. Many other actions, such as those in education and health, largely require that commitments made at previous summits and conferences be honoured. Honouring these commitments may, however, require redeploying public funds from less productive purposes. New or redeployed funds will also be required to finance institutions whose task it is to guide, facilitate, monitor or evaluate implementation of the Platform.

234. Studies have shown that the return on investment in women has generally outweighed the cost. Resources for the advancement of women are needed both from development funds in order to target women's programmes and from other sectoral funds, such as those for agriculture, education and population, which empower women and end discrimination on the basis of sex.

235. Funds to facilitate women's participation in the economy should be made available from the public and private sectors in the form of credit and other economic resources. Governments should create an enabling environment that encourages and facilitates the private sector's role.

A. National level

236. In order to successfully develop a national plan of action for the implementation of the Platform for Action, each country needs to clearly indicate the budgetary allocations and resources needed at each level and within each sector. Non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other institutions are also called upon to consider allocating the resources necessary for the implementation of the Platform.

237. Adequate resources should be allocated to national institutions for the advancement of women and other institutions having the mandate to implement the Platform. Where the institutions have been funded on a temporary basis, consideration should be given to placing them on an established basis.

238. In order to release resources for redeployment, international creditors should negotiate debt-relief arrangements based on implementation of the Platform for Action and Governments should reduce military expenditures.

239. Governments should take immediate steps to provide the legal and administrative basis for providing incentives to the private sector and communities to generate resources for implementing the Platform for Action.

240. The fund-raising capacity of non-governmental organizations, particularly women's organizations and networks, should be enhanced and they should be supported by Governments, which should be encouraged to work closely with them as important partners in the advancement of women.

B. Regional level

241. Regional development banks, regional business associations and other regional institutions should contribute to the implementation of the Platform for Action in their lending and other activities and should help to mobilize resources for this purpose.

C. International level

242. Adequate financial resources should be committed at the international level for the implementation of the Platform for Action. In this connection, those countries providing bilateral development cooperation should conduct a critical analysis of their assistance programmes with a view to re-orienting and channelling resources to achieve the objectives of the Platform. The official development assistance target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product (GNP) of developed countries should be maintained and encouragement given to increasing the share targeted to actions designed to implement the Platform. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development should continue the coordination arrangements developed in preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women as a means of monitoring and directing development assistance and should report annually on trends.

243. International financial institutions, including the World Bank Group, the International Monetary Fund, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the regional development banks, should examine their grants and lending and should target loans and grants to programmes intended to implement the Platform for Action, especially in the least developed countries.

244. Development funds and programmes of the United Nations system should undertake an immediate analysis of the extent to which their programmes and projects are directed to implementing the Platform for Action and, for the next programming cycle, should at least double the resources targeted towards

eliminating disparities between males and females in their technical assistance and lending activities.

245. Recognizing the special roles of UNIFEM and INSTRAW in the empowerment of women, the resources provided by Governments should be substantially increased by the year 2000.

246. Consideration should be given to strengthening, as appropriate, the Division for the Advancement of Women, regional programmes for the advancement of women and focal points on women's issues in the United Nations common system. Moreover, the Focal Point for Women in the Department of Administration and Management of the United Nations Secretariat should be strengthened. Provision of additional funds for these programmes in the light of the Platform for Action should be considered in future programme budgets.

Notes

1/ Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

2/ General Assembly resolution 34/180, annex.

3/ General Assembly resolution 44/25, annex.

4/ Final Report of the World Conference on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs, Jomtien, Thailand, 5-9 March 1990, Inter-Agency Commission (UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank) for the World Conference on Education for All, New York, 1990, appendix 1.

5/ Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 (A/CONF.171/13 and Add.1), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

6/ General Assembly resolution 48/104.

7/ General Assembly resolution 317 (IV), annex.

8/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 38 (A/47/38), chap. I.

9/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1125, No. 17512.

10/ See the addendum to the report of the Secretary-General on the preparation of a plan of action for a United Nations decade for human rights education (A/49/261/Add.1-E/1994/110/Add.1), annex, and General Assembly resolution 49/184.

11/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 189, No. 2545, p. 150.

12/ Ibid., vol. 606, No. 8791, p. 267.

13/ General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI).

14/ Report of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14-25 June 1993 (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I)), chap. III.

15/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1993, Supplement No. 7 (E/1993/27), chap. I, sect. C.